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HOW TO STYLE YOUR POT PLANTS

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XII
IX
VI
TUDOR
GENEVE
SWISS
MADE
28

TUDOR

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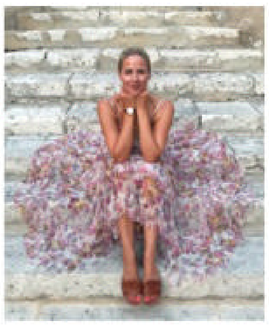
Spring is in the air...

Can you feel it? If I'm honest, I'm writing this note on a wet and windswept day, but I'm hoping by the time you read it, the weather will have brightened, bringing with it the anticipation of garden days and sunny soirees. It's this mood we're sharing – with a big dose of optimism – in this issue.

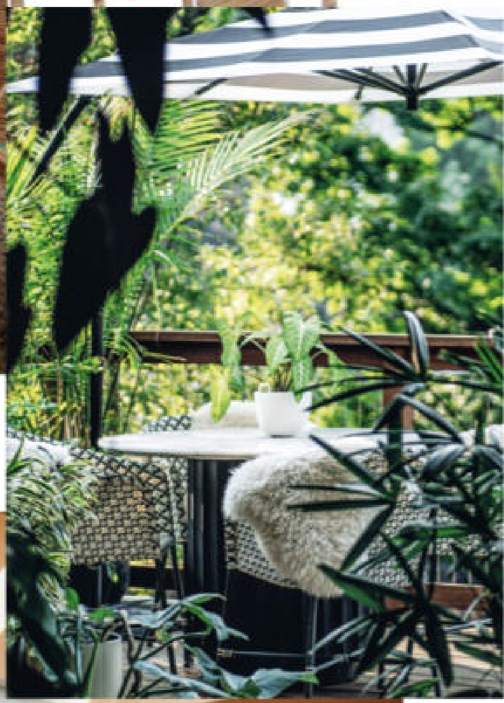
It starts with a shopping guide to dressing for summer weddings (as well as garden parties and fancy lunches) on page 12. There's a new spin on the steadfast floral dress, showstopper skirts and some delicious daytime sparkle. On that note, *White Hot* on page 68 compels us to embrace sequins, silk and lace for the months ahead (I'm in), and in *A Fresh Look* on page 82, *Red*'s beauty team share their new-season must-haves (from uplifting scents to miracle balms). We've gone alfresco at home on page 112, where Hilton Carter encourages us to take our pot plants outside for the ultimate garden styling. Meanwhile, on page 150, Gretchen Rubin inspires us to get more connected with our senses and, in turn, the world around us.

My favourite read this month is *The Shape Of Me*, on page 28. To celebrate the new film adaptation of Judy Blume's iconic pre-teen novel *Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret*, three writers reflect on the piece of pop culture that had a profound effect on their own teenage years. I'll confess, I devoured every single Judy Blume book when I was growing up – and those of Paula Danziger, who equally captured the angst, uncertainty and, at times, euphoria of puberty. I lived vicariously through those novels, but also the films of John Hughes; *Pretty In Pink*, *The Breakfast Club* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* set the tone for me of what life could and should be like. American high school seemed so much cooler and more exciting than my own all-girls grammar, yet although I deeply craved boys in letterman jackets who drove their parent's convertibles, and wanted to be prom queen (or a cheerleader at the very least), clearly, none of this was to be my fate. Still, Jake Ryan from *Sixteen Candles* remains my forever crush and one day I still hope to sit cross-legged in pink chiffon to blow out my birthday candles. A girl can dream.



Sarah Tomczak

Editor Sarah Tomczak



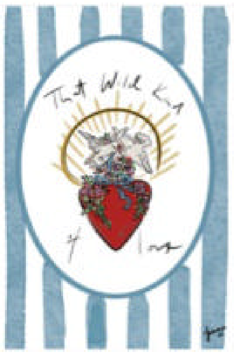
TOP: Elegant simplicity (page 68). RIGHT: Botanical style tips (page 112). BELOW RIGHT: Eco-friendly DIY decor (page 98). BELOW LEFT: Molly Ringwald and Michael Schoeffling in *Sixteen Candles*

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT PRESENT? TREAT A LOVED ONE TO A *RED* SUBSCRIPTION. TURN TO PAGE 64 FOR OUR GREAT OFFER.

Editor's picks

Denim skirts are back with a bang. This is my favourite.
Skirt, £195, Rixo

Crisply striped – and in three colourways.
Shirtdress, £250, Jasper Conran



Limited-edition print by Jenna Elsby-Bennett.
Print, £45, Studio Collective

This fabric takes three months to handweave.
Top, £250; trousers, £275, both Bamford

Truly special decorative glass.
Hirota glass, £180, Abask

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHLOE MALLETT, RYLAND PETERS & SMALL/CATHERINE GRATWICKE, ALAMY, HILTON CARTER LIVING WILD

Red

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OFFERS

64 SUBSCRIBE TO OUR MAGAZINES TODAY

VASE, £45,
Rose & Grey

EARRINGS,
£2,075,
Sophie Bille
Brahe at
Net-A-Porter

112

68

BOOTS,
£525,
By Far

WALTON & CO
NAPKINS,
£24 for a set
of 4, The Lighting
Company

104

NÉROLI OUTRENOIR
GUERLAIN
PARIS

GUERLAIN NÉROLI OUTRENOIR LIQUID
HAND SOAP, £70 (refill £56)

CUFF, £275,
Vintage Jean
Paul Gaultier at
Susan Caplan

This month's cover

Photography Chloe Mallett **Fashion director** Oonagh Brennan **Fashion assistant** Corin Ripley **Hair** Marco Testa using Sam McKnight Modern Hairspray Multi-tasking Styling Mist **Makeup** Ruth Warrior at Ray Brown Pro using Chantecaille makeup and Sisley Paris skincare **Model** Isilda at Models 1 **Isilda wears** DRESS; Zimmermann. EARRINGS, Tilly Thomas Lux **Creative director** Philippa Williams **Production (Portugal)** Tiago Nobre **Production (UK)** Fiona Andrews **With thanks to** Quinta Da Comporta

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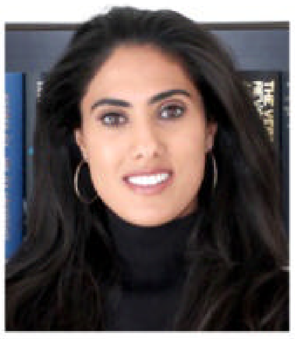
MAY 2023

GRETCHEN RUBIN gives her insight into the senses on page 150.

MY GREATEST INDULGENCE RIGHT NOW IS… Coffee. I drink gallons of black coffee throughout the day.



KULDEEP KNOX shares her favourite things on page 186.

MY GREATEST INDULGENCE RIGHT NOW IS… A weekly deep tissue massage – although it sometimes feels like a punishment!

ABIGAIL BURDESS describes her experience of couples therapy on page 38.

MY GREATEST INDULGENCE RIGHT NOW IS… A daily lie-in – my husband drops the kids off at school now.

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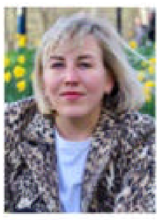


HERE'S WHAT *RED* ACTING DIGITAL EDITOR ZLATA RODIONOVA IS LOVING AT REDONLINE.CO.UK THIS MONTH

£195, Ghost

£375, Kate Spade

£495, Needle & Thread

BE OUR GUEST

The best dresses for wedding season

£120, & Other Stories

SUPERCHARGE YOUR SEX DRIVE

All you need to know about libido

RESTAURANTS WITH ROOMS

Where to go in the UK to dine and rest your head, too

Latymer restaurant at Pennyhill Park Hotel

£69, The White Company

£39.50, Marks & Spencer

THE STRAW BAG EDIT

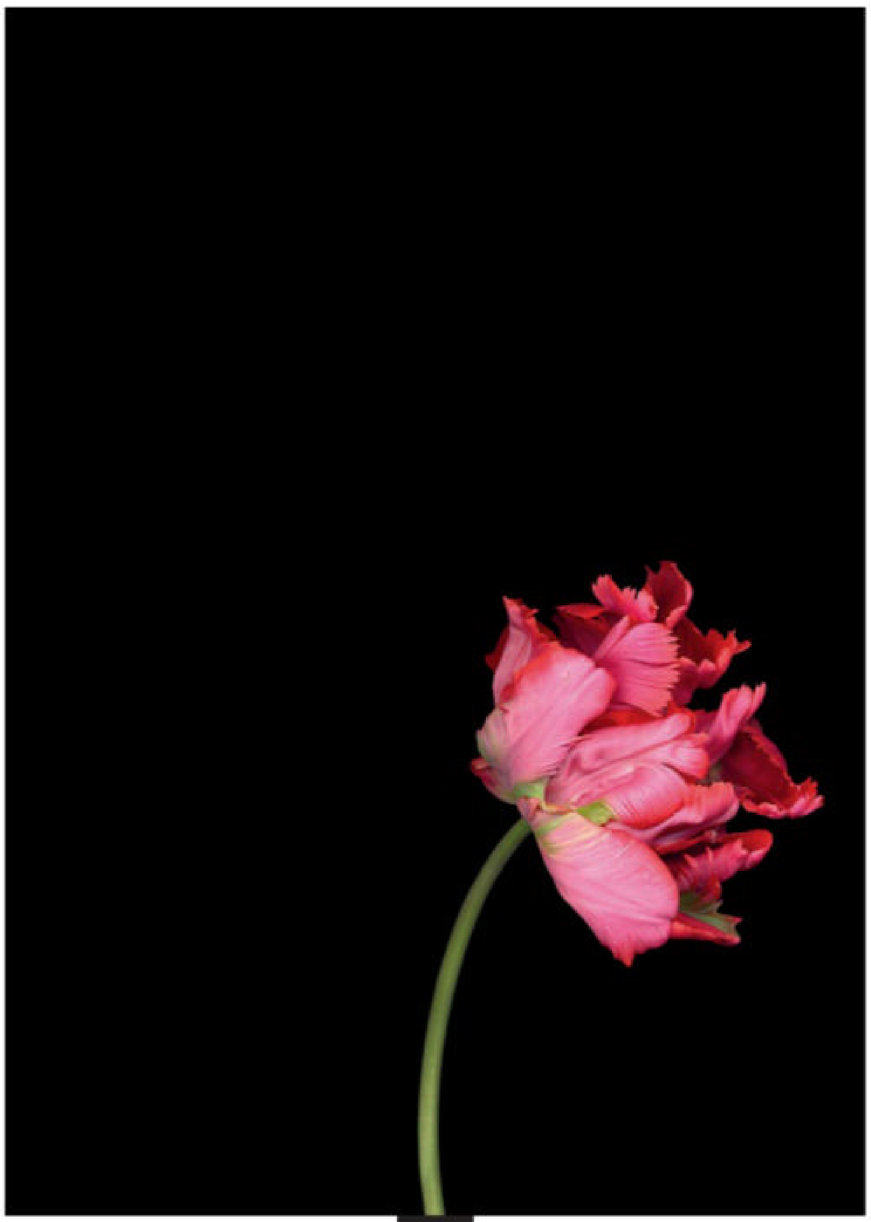
All the chicest styles to buy now

£125, Arket

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

The
FLORAL
Fragrance Family

Step into the garden. Pick a single stem or a full bouquet. Rose and lily are note-perfect, but look beyond for lesser known buds. Drift by in a cloud of softly sweet *honeysuckle* or snap with the tang of frangipani. Natural beauty, however you define it.



THE FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION UK

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Fragrance lasts

One to WATCH

THE COOLEST THING YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR JEWELLERY RIGHT NOW IS GO BIG AND GO BOLD – AND YOUR WATCH SHOULD BE NO EXCEPTION. TUDOR'S STAND-OUT BLACK BAY TIMEPIECE, WITH ITS MIX OF GOLD AND STEEL HARDWARE (AND NOT SPARING ON THE SPARKLE), LAYERS BEAUTIFULLY WITH BRACELETS AND BANGLES, AND CAN ELEVATE A CLASSIC WARDROBE OF SIMPLE STAPLES.

WATCH, £6,970, Tudor

WORDS: JODIE DUNWORTH

ON THE GUEST LIST...

A SEASON OF CELEBRATION CALLS FOR SOMETHING NEW

The frill of it

Ruffles and frills are an instant style go-to. Keeping the volume up top creates drama while maintaining an elegant shape. Pair with knee-high kitten heels and a simple velvet ribbon.

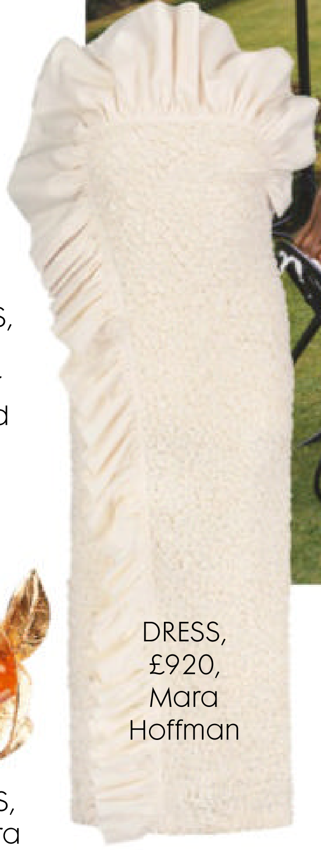
DEVEAUX S/S23

BOW, £6.90, Braid & Bow

BOOTS, £525, By Far

DRESS, £75, River Island

EARRINGS, £17.99, Zara


DRESS, £920, Mara Hoffman

CHANEL ROUGE ALLURE IN SHADE 99, PIRATE, £35

Tone it up

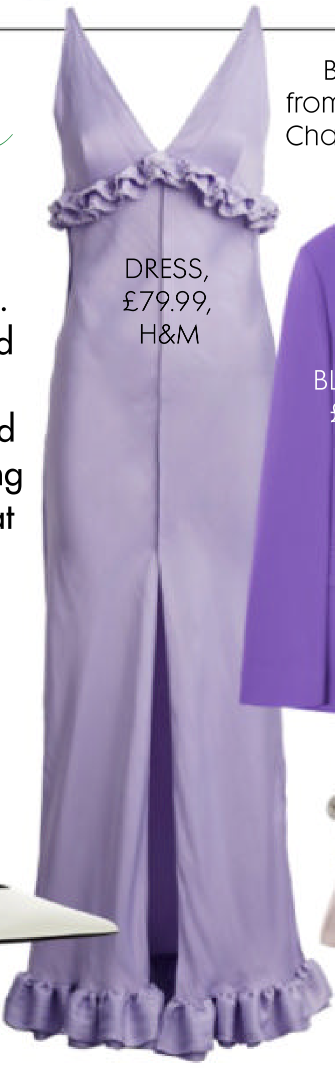
Pick your colour of choice and turn it into a whole new look. Tonal dressing, inspired by Gucci, is a great way to add depth and creativity while solving the dilemma of what to pair with those singularly bright pieces in your wardrobe...

RING, £45, Susan Caplan

BLAZER, £68, Next

TROUSERS, £219, Marc Cain

TOP, £350, Victoria Beckham


DRESS, £79.99, H&M

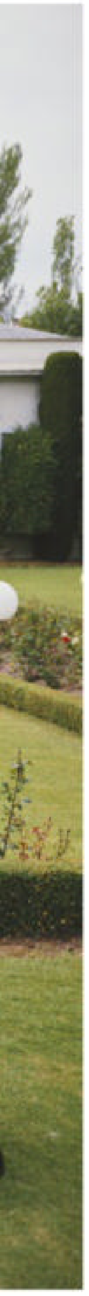
BARRETTE, rent from £70 for 4 days, Chanel at BagButler

BLAZER, £135, Cos

SHOES, £49.99, Zara

BAG, £85, Dune London

GUCCI RESORT S/S23



TROUSERS, £440, Stine Goya

BLAZER, £470, Stine Goya

BAG, £285, Ba&sh

SHOES, £59.99, Zara

Shine bright

While metallics may feel like a winter trend, summer sparkle is seriously underrated. From sheer sequins to embellished beading, watch it dazzle in the midday sun and prepare to be converted.

16ARLINGTON S/S23

TOP, £80, Anthropologie

SKIRT, £109.99, Mango

BELT, £59.95, Massimo Dutti

Midnight hour

Dreamy shades of burgundy, oyster and slate paired with gold jewellery on a hot summer's evening creates a feeling of indulgence.

EARRINGS, £165, Alighieri

TOP, £320, Agolde

BAG, £1,300, Aranyani

SAINT LAURENT S/S23

DRESS, £85, Amy Lynn at Selfridges

CUFF, £275, Jean Paul Gaultier at Susan Caplan

SHOES, £305, Ba&sh

Fringe benefits

Tassels can enhance more tailored pieces for a minimalist silhouette with added intrigue, while bright colours give them an instant sunshine feel.

JIL SANDER S/S23

DRESS, £445, Aje

EARRINGS, £28, Orelia

SKIRT, £70, 8 by Yoox

TOP, £456, Wales Bonner

SHOES, £1,150, Bottega Veneta

Au naturel

Keep your accessories feeling organic with elements of raffia and wood. Embrace cross-pollination with clashing floral prints.

EARRINGS, £150, Cult Gaia

TOP, £310, Sea New York

SKIRT, £320, The Great. at Net-A-Porter

BAG, £285, Anya Hindmarch

SHOES, £580, Cult Gaia

£370, Reformation

PHILOSOPHY S/S23

£690, Ulla Johnson

£320, Rotate

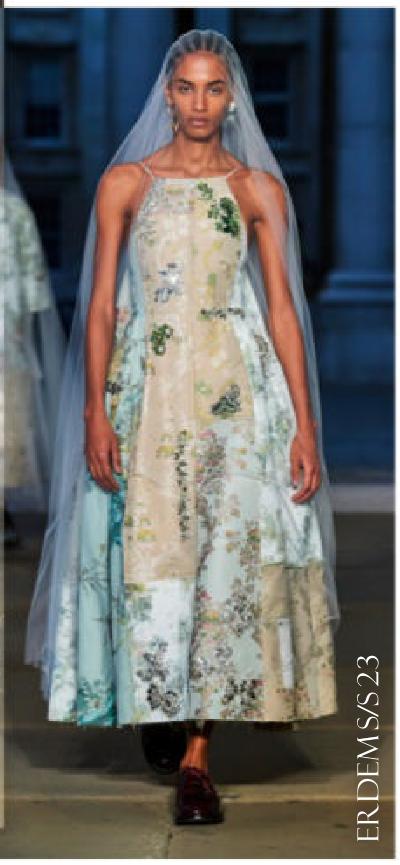
£335, Rixo

DIOR S/S23

Garden of Eden

Ditch the cutesy florals and go for something a little more wild at heart. Twisted ivy, brambles and vines have all crept into a much more subdued palette, bringing an enchanted forest-like quality to floaty dresses and prairie separates.

ERDEM S/S23



ERDEM S/S23

DRESS, £120, & Other Stories

Greener living

Vibrant and fresh; it's time to inject a healthy dose of colour into your summer soirees. Whether it's a standout head-to-toe look or you're pairing it with monochrome for a cool fashion edge, it's time to go green.

SKIRT, £89, Arket

TOP, £330, Jacquemus at MatchesFashion

BAG, £35, River Island

Colour combo

This skirt co-ord is the contemporary alternative to a dress and a fuss-free way to do bright block colour. Why not crank up the vibrancy further by adding a contrasting red clutch bag and matching shoes?

BAG, £199, L.K.Bennett

SUNGLASSES, £235, Gucci

HAIR CLIPS, £100 for a set of 3, Lelet NY

TOP, £220; SKIRT, £220, both Kate Spade

SHOES, £545, Manolo Blahnik

TAMU McPHERSON AT MILAN FASHION WEEK

SHOES, £215, Jonak

NECKLACE, £29.99, Pilgrim

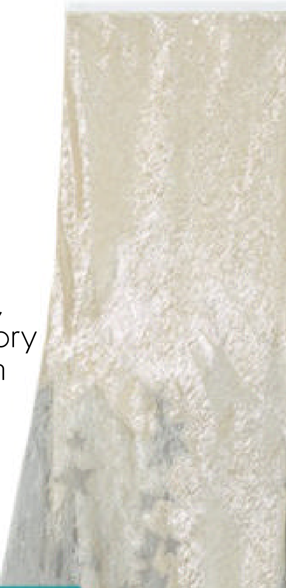
High-low

For more relaxed gatherings, a simple tank with this satin ballroom skirt is the perfect high-low mix. Finish with sky-high platforms or a pair of barely-there sandals.

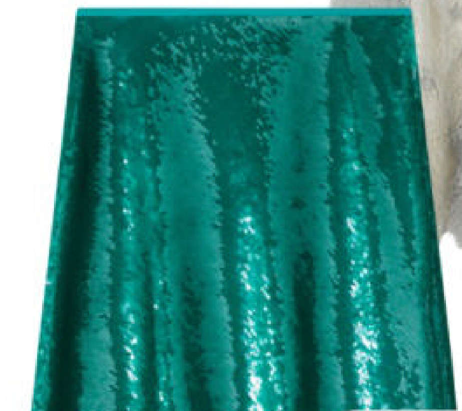
ZUHAIR MURAD S/S23

The showstopper skirt

An amazing skirt holds a plethora of possibilities. Choose a style you love and treasure it for ever, reworking it for every event in your social calendar, from garden parties right through to wedding season.



SKIRT, £POA, Tory Burch



SKIRT, £175, Jigsaw

SKIRT, £126, Leocé

ZIMMERMANN S/S23

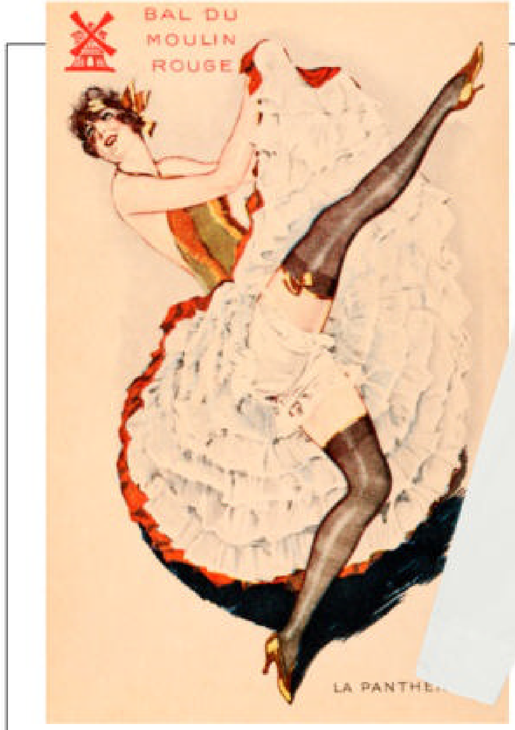
SKIRT, £755.31, Noon By Noor

SKIRT, rent from £60, Ronny Kobo at DCEY

SKIRT, £199.99, H&M

Wear with...

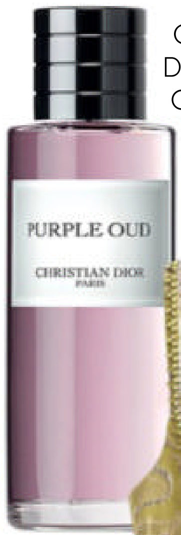
The key components to make your skirt party-ready.



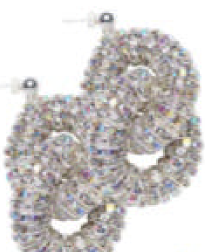
SHIRT, £59, Cos

SHOES, £925, Saint Laurent

BAG, £59.99, H&M



CHRISTIAN DIOR PURPLE OUD, £225



EARRINGS, £204.25, Pearl Octopuss.y

TOP, £69.99, H&M

COMPILED BY: JODIE DUNWORTH. PHOTOGRAPHY: LAUNCHMETRICS.COM/MATTEO VALLE/GIANLUCA CARRARO/ALESSANDRO VIERO/SPOTLIGHT, GETTY, GIOVANNI GIANNONI. CONVERTED PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF PRINT

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DRESS, £2,795, The Own Studio

AND THE BRIDE WORE...

MEET THE SPRING WEDDING TRENDS COMING TO AN AISLE NEAR YOU

Under cover

Feeling good all day depends on what lies underneath. Simone Pérèle's collection of lingerie separates (below) in timeless white and soft pink have been designed to remain concealed under any dress. And Skims' Sheer Sculpt bodysuit creates a smooth silhouette.

BODY, £85, Spanx

BODY, £68 Skims

BRA, £85; BRIEFS, £35, both Simone Pérèle

The Own Studio

London-based The Own Studio brings a cool aesthetic to the wedding dress search. Focusing on expert tailoring, the label's ethos is bridal-meets-evening-wear, resulting in luxe wardrobe staples that can be worn long after the big day.

NECKLACE, to rent from £24 a day, Covett

DRESS, £2,860, Christopher John Rogers at Net-A-Porter

Something new

When it comes to shopping for cult brands, Net-A-Porter is a good place to start – and the same is true for bridal wear. Its wedding edit includes exclusive designs from Christopher John Rogers and Khaite, perfect for the non-traditionalist.

Something borrowed

From Instagrammable dresses to luxury handbags, occasion rentals have become big sustainable news. Covett's wedding subscription allows you to borrow two pieces from its drool-worthy fine jewellery collection for that million-dollar feeling without breaking the bank.

RING, to rent from £24 a day, Covett

BRACELET, £3,675, Mizuki at Net-A-Porter

BAG, £2,630, Khaite at Net-A-Porter

EARRINGS, to rent from £24 a day, Covett

SHOES, £890, Khaite at Net-A-Porter

EARRINGS, £2,075, Sophie Bille Brahe at Net-A-Porter

DRESS, £970,
By Malina

Love letters

From Sophie Bille Brahe's 'Lettre de Lumière' handwriting-style rings to Tilly Thomas Lux necklaces, alphabet jewellery is adding a modern twist to wedding-day crystals. Wear your partner's initial for a subtle, romantic detail.

NECKLACE,
£68, Tilly
Thomas Lux

RING,
£8,485,
Sophie
Bille Brahe
at Browns
Fashion

NECKLACE, £530,
Roxanne First

By Malina

Stockholm-based designer By Malina mixes Scandi minimalism with feminine details such as ruffles and puff sleeves that'll appeal to more relaxed affairs, be it a rooftop gathering or a beach ceremony. Plus, the majority of materials used in the collection consist of 100% recycled polyester and viscose.

DRESS,
£650,
Rixo

DRESS, £1,995,
Christopher Kane

DRESS, £4,995,
Erdem

Above: Princess Grace of Monaco on her wedding day

VALENTINO S/S23

CHANEL HAUTE COUTURE S/S23

Lace up

Embodying the elegance of Princess Grace of Monaco, mock necks and beautiful French lace are having a bridal revival. Valentino and Chanel brought sheer delight to their haute couture catwalks, with crystal embellishments and ostrich feathers for an up-to-date flourish.

WORDS: JODIE DUNWORTH. PHOTOGRAPHY: BETTMAN ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES, VALENTINO/IMAXTREE.COM, CARLO SCARPATO/IMAXTREE.COM

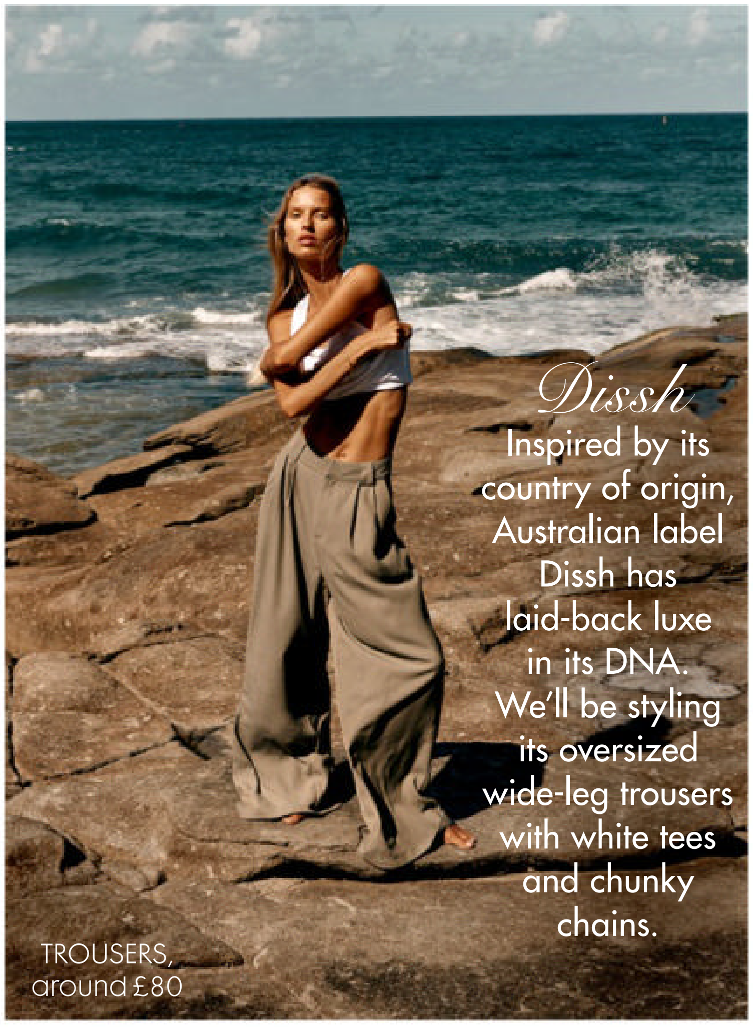
SMALL BRANDS WE LOVE

EXCITING AND INNOVATIVE,
MEET THE NEW
NAMES THAT ARE INFORMING
AND TRANSFORMING
THE WAY WE DRESS

The Label Edition

The Barcelona-based brand's expertise in luxury marketing has created the billowing blouses we all need in our wardrobes. Working with a dreamy colour palette, founders Véronique Vaillant von Siebenthal and Laura Johansson have perfected fanciful feminine silhouettes that you'll want to add to your basket immediately.

BLOUSE, £313; TROUSERS, £136



Dissh

Inspired by its country of origin, Australian label Dissh has laid-back luxe in its DNA. We'll be styling its oversized wide-leg trousers with white tees and chunky chains.

TROUSERS, around £80

LASTFRAME

Its graphic bags are *the* Insta-worthy accessory, where genderless design meets traditional Japanese techniques. Great for weekend strolls in your trench and trainers.

OBI BAG, £250

CHECK BAG, £250

EARRINGS, £335

PEARL OCTOPUSS.Y AT KOIBIRD

Fuelling our magpie-like obsession with sparkle, founder Cathrine Børter has secured cult status for her jewellery brand Pearl Octopuss.y. Add drama to your LBD with a pair of its pearl and swirl earrings.

COMPILED BY: CORIN RIPLEY

Viktoria Chan

Introducing Viktoria Chan's heart-stoppingly chic silhouettes. Mastering minimalism, she constructs architectural designs and versatile staples for ultra elegance. We love her detailed tops and sculptural outerwear.

CREAM TOP, around £190; BLUE TOP, around £220

TROUSERS, £495

JACKET, £895

Priya Ahluwalia launched her label in 2018

Ahluwalia

Giving vintage material new life, Priya Ahluwalia is the London-based designer behind the patchwork belted jackets at the top of our wish lists. Her kaleidoscopic perspective on how arts and culture intersect with fashion has attained her collaborations with Ganni, Mulberry and Paul Smith, cementing her as the most coveted of the fashion crowd.

PARIS TEXAS

The magic of Italian footwear brand Paris Texas lies in its materials. Think studs and toecap hardware vs feminine shades and sparkle in a variety of mules, boots and towering sandals. The result: shoes with tough sophistication that will elevate the everyday and bring edge to the evening.

SHOES, around £400

SHOES, around £400

SHOES, around £700

BLAZERS, start from around £1,000

Blazé Milano

Former *ELLE* Italia stylists Maria Sole Torlonia, Delfina Pinardi and Corrada Rodriguez D'Acri founded Blazé Milano. The trio's passion for perfectly curated hero styles has led to its cult classic everyday – or every night – blazers. The S/S 23 collection expands into soft-touch tailoring in sugary shades.

BLAZER, £425

SKIRT, £395

LAURA PITHARAS

Using fabrics woven by wind power in the Yorkshire Dales, Laura Pitharas flips perceived menswear silhouettes into showstopping suits, skirts and shirts – the modern women's answer to a timeless and sustainable wardrobe.

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CURVES
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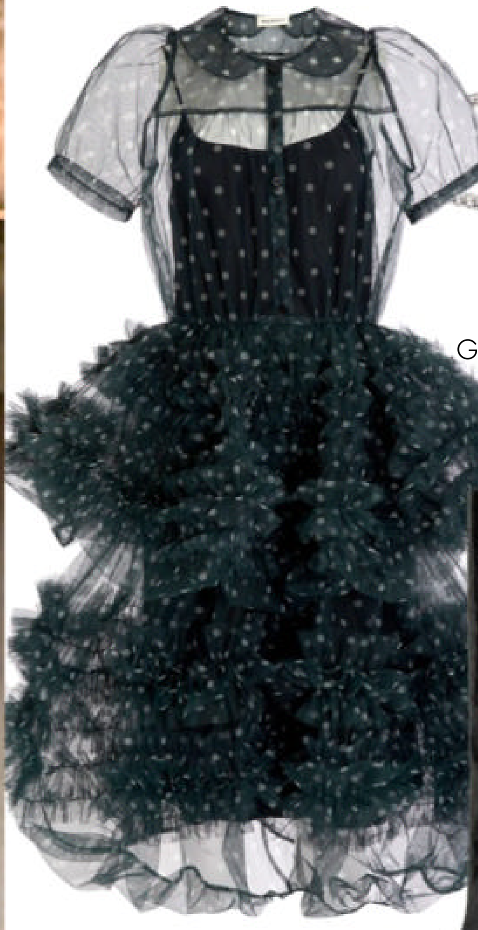
Izzie 4 seater sofa. Scatter cushions are optional extras. See in selected stores or online for details. Event Price £899, After Event Price £999. Offer end 9.95.23. Delivery charges may apply. dfs.co.uk

THE STYLE INFLUENCER

RED FASHION DIRECTOR OONAGH BRENNAN SHARES HER FASHION FAVOURITES

DIOR S/S23



DRESS, £POR, Molly Goddard

NECKLACE, £245, Heavenly London

BOOTS, £710, Toteme at Net-A-Porter

DARK TIMES

Billowing maxi dresses, chunky boots and ribbon-adorned pigtails are bringing dark romance to party dressing thanks to Dior's S/S 23 runway and Wednesday Addams's covetable gothic wardrobe (anyone else obsessed with the Netflix drama?). Any excuse to get back to black, I'm leaning right in.

DRESS, rent from £78, John Lewis Rental

NEW RENTAL

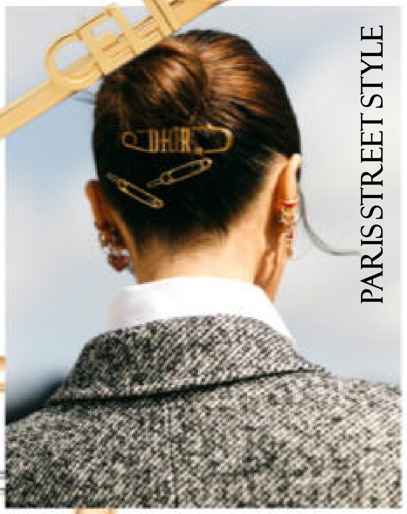
Our favourite department store has launched John Lewis Rental. Hire everything from fabulous feather-trim party dresses and sequin jumpsuits by labels such as Barrus London, Elliatt and Hutch to sustainable skiwear from OOSC. Sizes range from 4-28, pieces are delivered straight to your door, returns can be posted back in a prepaid envelope and John Lewis & Partners will even take care of the dry-cleaning for you. With wedding dresses and maternity wear to follow, it's leading the charge in the high street circular fashion revolution.

TRAINERS, £110 each, both New Balance

KICK START

The seasonal switch-up calls for fresh trainers and this spring it's all about New Balance. I love the retro shades of burnt orange and grey in soft suede and leather. The perfect mix of sporty, stylish and 1970s, it's a winning combination in my book. I'll wear them with long maxi skirts and chunky rollnecks.

HAIR SLIDE, £270, Celine



PARIS STREET STYLE

HAIR CLIP, £225, Charlotte Chesnais

BARRETTE, £395, Completedworks

GET A GRIP

Chunky gold barrettes, clips and slides are bringing a new grown-up sophistication to the world of hair accessories. Layer them up for maximum impact.

HAIR SLIDES, £450, Prada at Net-A-Porter

HAIR CLIPS, £12, Accessorize

PHOTOGRAPHY: SARAH TREACHER/IMAXTREE, PACKSHOT FACTORY LTD

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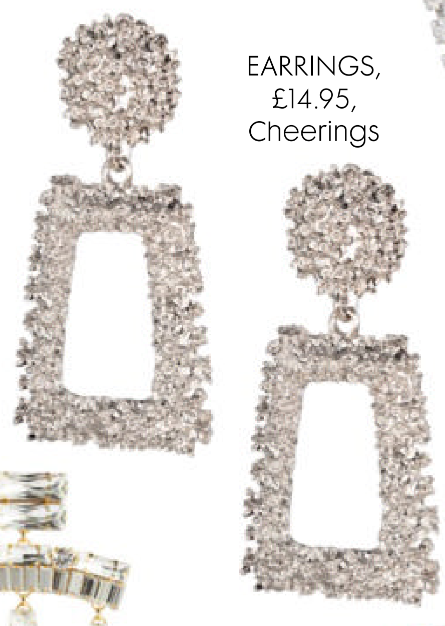
GIAMBATTISTA VALLI S/S 23

CRYSTAL CLEAR

WE'VE SEEN THE FUTURE AND IT'S COMPLETELY CRYSTALLISED, WITH SHOULDER-SWEEPING EARRINGS AND CHANDELIER-WORTHY GEMS TAKING CENTRE STAGE


EARRINGS, £14.95, Cheerings

NECKLACE, £225, Susan Caplan

EARRINGS, £275, Alessandra Rich

EARRINGS, £380, Area at MatchesFashion

NECKLACE, £25.99, Zara

NECKLACE, £25.99, Mango

CUFF, £310, Aquazzura

RING, £220, Pearl Octopuss.y

NECKLACE, £78, Butler & Wilson

RING, £135, Swarovski

BRACELET, £85, Tilly Thomas Lux

EARRINGS, £72, Shyla

EARRINGS, £135, Helene Zubeldia at Fenwick

BRACELET, £275, Fallon at MatchesFashion

COMPILED BY: JO ATKINSON

If we took a holiday...

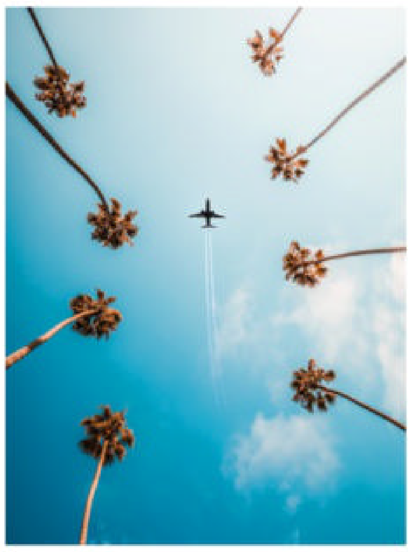
IT STARTS WITH AN ILL-THOUGHT-OUT PLAN DEVISED OVER A LATE-NIGHT MARTINI… MHAIRI McFARLANE PONDERS THE PITFALLS OF MINI-BREAKS WITH FRIENDS

Holiday regrets? Mhairi McFarlane has had a few

The cult film *Withnail And I* has many memorable scenes, but arguably the most popular of all is the image of a rain-sodden Richard E Grant next to Paul McGann explaining in panic: ‘We’ve gone on holiday by mistake!’ It’s a plea of terror that makes perfect emotional sense to many of us: going away with friends is fraught with a particular set of problems – often ones you start encountering before the plane’s landing gear has retracted from the tarmac.

But let’s start with the idea itself, often conceived while drunk, emerging organically from the chatter while you’re scanning the nightcap menu at the local bistro, full of bonhomie and pappardelle: ‘It’s flawless! Genius! We can easyJet from Stansted! And a Fernet-Branca, please!’

Like novelty flavoured hot cross buns and a third Magic Mike film, a mini-break with your Prosecco coven is a great concept in principle, and was so seamlessly organised – one friend, the self-appointed CEO of your travels, has her iPhone calendar out before you’ve even paid the bill. What could go wrong, when you’re such close pals? Well, okay, you don’t know Amy that well…



Come the next morning, either when you remember, or when the new WhatsApp group (profile picture: Jennifer Coolidge in *The White Lotus*) reminds you, you live in hope you might discreetly memory hole the plan. If you’re lucky, a Churchill’s War Rooms-level debate over the date – which someone has realised clashes with their kids’ sports day – might sink the whole project. But when you’ve finally lighted on that magical four-day period during a six-month window, then comes the portion of the negotiations that sends those frantically typing participants into silence – the budget.

Veterans of hen parties will know what I mean when I say you’re invariably hostage to the highest roller of the gang. With a sickening lurch, you check the hotel price in Euros and realise that’s the cost per night, not the total stay. Eventually, someone without four grand to spare for an impromptu weekend’s merriment will hastily divert everyone to an Airbnb villa, using the ‘blowing kiss’ emoji to keep it light-hearted.

> *‘Going away with friends is fraught with a particular set of problems’*

Once you’ve collected the keys from your Superhost’s lockbox, the member of the party who did the square root of sod all of the boring organisational stuff will breeze into the palatial double with en suite and casually drop her bags. Nine times out of 10, this is Amy, the ‘FOAF’ (friend of a friend) you don’t know nearly well enough, and, being British, you displace your seething resentment on to your mutual acquaintance.

The truth is, going away with people you usually see for evenings out is as different as dating is to moving in with a partner (just replace turning every bathroom into a wet room with hogging the mirror, and using up the milk with ordering in every possible type of milk). Oh, and what happened to the communal booze fund? More often than not, it’s been spent on a Michelin-starred preordered dinner that you thought only two of you voted for. Tempers fray further on days out, which involve the holiday CEO, who has started to hate her fast-paced role, waving a phone showing Google Maps and snapping, ‘I’ve not been here before either, have I?!’

Expectations, like mileage, will vary. Only now do you discover the divide between those who expected to do three historic landmarks a day and those who would rather be on a lounger by the pool (ditto people who go to ‘see’ the beach and those who want to lie on it for seven hours straight).

Still, this being the era of social media, you chuck the Mayfair filter over your tapas, adding captions about the GLUG-genheim in rosy-cheeked, grinning selfies, making onlookers sigh with envy at your fabulous adventure. Because that’s the mark of a good girls’ holiday, right?

Only months later, in the depths of winter, do you scroll idly through the memories, feeling nostalgic and forgetting the heavy editing. You had a good time, didn’t you? And do you know what, you should do it more. Which explains how you end up receiving a WhatsApp message one hungover Friday morning, reminding you that you’ve opted in for Cologne 2024.

Mhairi McFarlane’s latest novel, Between Us (HarperCollins), is out 11th May

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

L'INTERDIT
GIVENCHY

The shape of me

AS A FILM ADAPTATION OF JUDY BLUME'S ICONIC PRE-TEEN NOVEL *ARE YOU THERE GOD? IT'S ME, MARGARET* HITS OUR SCREENS, WE ASKED THREE WRITERS TO SHARE THE PIECE OF POP CULTURE THAT WOULD CARVE OUT THEIR IDENTITIES IN THE YEARS TO COME…

A DELL YEARLING BOOK
Judy Blume
Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.

Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret

Sophie Heawood

I am nine years old, in the back of my parents' car, about to spend a whole day on the motorway with an American author called Judy Blume. My dad has lived in America and seen how beloved she is by interesting people over there; he thinks *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* might be a good fit for a growing girl. I can't believe how right he is and find I am pulled straight into the life of an anxious 11-year-old who has just left New York for a different life in the suburbs.

I'm several pages in by the time we've even pulled out of my granny's street to start the long drive home, but the girl in the book, Margaret, seems to be obsessed with – what's this word, this thing her friends keep going on about getting – periods?

It seems to only happen to girls, apparently, so I decide to ask my mum. She goes red, glances at my dad and my brother – says she'll tell me later, back at home. But home is ages away, I say, as we keep on driving. What does it mean? Why will nobody help me out with some vocabulary here?

Thank God for a book that showed pubescent girls are concerned with the meaning of life itself

Before we've even got back, I've read the whole thing, having just about deduced that something surprising happens to American girls when they get to a certain age. (I'm not entirely convinced this mystery thing is going to happen to me, though – it seems very New Jersey?) And I've been quietly giggling the whole way home as the group of four best friends try to make their boobs grow while chanting, 'I must, I must, I must increase my bust.' (Has anyone who's read the book forgotten that line?)

I'm confused why my parents would recommend a book and then clam up about its contents. But this is exciting;

WE ARE ALL GOING TO DIE

Sophie found Judy Blume's book a real eye-opener this is new. This isn't like the fantasy adventures I have on my book shelf at home. And it's a testimony to Judy Blume's pure voice that I have persevered to the end without any idea of why these girls are getting something from a 'drugstore' to put inside their underwear.

Looking back now, decades later, I can see that what actually filtered through to me was that our heroine Margaret was not always nice and not always popular, but sometimes popular and sometimes nice. Like a real, flawed person. Like me. Even better, she was in dialogue with a friendly God whom she talked to in her bedroom. She asked him for help, for reassurance and for good stuff to happen to her. She wanted to know the bigger picture, to make some sense of what was going on and fill in the gaps between what the grown-ups had and hadn't told her. I could feel her pain entirely.

Aged nine, I, too, had been taking myself off to church on Sunday mornings for some time, joining other families there while my own family stayed at home, slightly bemused by my calling. I had always felt God was watching me, seeing me, even though this was not the sort of thing that people seemed to talk to children about in 1980s Yorkshire. And, just like Margaret, I would go on to wonder if my own chest would ever develop, if I would be the last to get a bra, secretly scrutinising my reflection in the mirror, looking for a sign that something was going on there.

Thank God, then (if indeed you are there), for a book that showed that pubescent girls talk about sex and secrets and who they fancy, but are equally concerned with the meaning of life itself, or whether their parents are right to deny them a religious life.

Because only as an adult re-reading the book do I see that it is also the story of a mother whose judgemental Christian parents have abandoned her for marrying a Jew. Margaret's father is trying to escape his spiritual background, too, but the book shows that family will find you in the end, though it doesn't suggest there is a right way to respond when they do. Ultimately, Margaret's mum and dad eventually allow her to make her own choices – something they were never allowed to do – and the family develops a closer, more trusting relationship. The entire lack of proscription is what makes Judy Blume so great. She never reads like an adult trying to tell a child what to do. She writes in the voices of the kids, watching and wondering, marvelling at the confusion and hypocrisy of the people who are supposed to be in charge.

P.S. I have not managed to get my own 11-year-old daughter into Judy Blume yet. It kills me. Why does she not jump on this stuff like I did? Is it because she knows it all already?

The Outsiders

Farrah Storr

For the first 11 years of my life, I had no concept that people were different. I didn't see class or race or indeed even gender. I thought most people arrived into this world with the same sort of breaks; that the kids who came to school with dirty trousers and very little in their lunch boxes had just as much as me and everyone I knew. That was until I saw *The Outsiders*.

It sounds dramatic to say a film changed the way I think, but I honestly believe that the right story, introduced at the right time, can send tremors through the rest of your life. Francis Ford Coppola's 1983 film about a bunch of kids from the wrong side of the tracks did that for me.

Ostensibly, *The Outsiders* is about two gangs – the Greasers and the Socs – and the tribal hatred they feel towards one another. It's a boy's film really – though the book was written by a 16-year-old girl called S.E. Hinton. The cast was pretty much all male and it was violent and gritty with themes seemingly beyond my 11-year-old comprehension: inequality, loyalty, self-identity versus the herd mentality. That sort of thing. But it captured me from the moment my brother brought it home from the local video store and jammed it into the VHS player.

Of course, *The Outsiders* was hugely glamorous in its own way. After all, it starred the entire Brat Pack – a moniker given to the seven or so most bankable (and beautiful) stars in 1980s Hollywood: Patrick Swayze, Rob Lowe, Matt Dillon, Emilio Estevez, Tom Cruise, Ralph Macchio and C Thomas Howell, who played the sensitive lead role of Ponyboy Curtis. I had a crush on at least five of them – though, like the rest of the world in 1989, it was mainly Rob Lowe and Matt Dillon who made repeated viewings of the film a requirement between 1989 and 1993.

Like Ponyboy Curtis, I was a shy, sensitive kid, often on the outside of things. I didn't – nay couldn't – connect with groups of girls at school. I spent an awful lot of time in my own head, writing diary extracts, reading poetry, mooning about by myself: a spectator of life rather than a true participant. It's not that I ever felt it was wrong to be that way, I just didn't know a lot of kids who were like that. And then along came Ponyboy Curtis. Suddenly I felt understood. At last, it felt like my entire way of being was validated by one of cinema's most romantic characters.

The right story, introduced at the right time, can send tremors through the rest of your life

Though it's been many years since I've watched *The Outsiders*, I can tell you with clear-eyed accuracy the exact scene that changed it all for me. It's when Ponyboy gets up early one morning to look at the sunrise with his best friend, Johnny. There's a pinky-gold sky and Johnny, the child with perhaps the toughest background in the film, asks why the sky can't stay that pretty all the time, to which Ponyboy recites the Robert Frost poem *Nothing Gold Can Stay*. I must have read that poem a hundred times before I understood its meaning: that youth is fleeting and that life eventually changes us all.

Were you to watch *The Outsiders* now – I suspect you would think it a pretty shonky film. I watched some clips on YouTube recently and the script was poor, the acting a little clunky. But that's one of life's deals, I suppose. The pieces of culture that helped build the person you became, themselves become obsolete over time.

I will, however, always be thankful for the way *The Outsiders* made me think about the world. I went on to become a writer and editor, one whose focus was very much on the 'outsider' perspective. I spent my career looking for those 'untold' stories, perspectives that sat outside the majority and ideas that contradicted those of the herd. It has sometimes got me into trouble. But it has always felt the right thing to do. And in many ways, I have *The Outsiders* to thank for that.

The Outsiders put many young male actors on the map

Farrah Storr writes the Substack, Things Worth Knowing

Jagged Little Pill

Natasha Lunn

It's 1999 and most things in my life are about getting boys' attention. Some days I dress like them in the hope they'll think I'm cool: baggy jeans, Eastpak backpack, chunky DC skateboard trainers, which look ridiculous on 14-year-old skinny ankles. Other times I want to convince them I'm sexy: satin mini skirt, strapless Miss Selfridge boob tube, too much Superdrug bronzer. Decisions from what to wear to who to be are filtered through an idea of what boys might want or deem credible, and music is no exception: my CD rack is full of male-fronted rock bands the boys I fancy listen to. Korn, Deftones, Mogwai. Teenage joy is diluted by another unsuccessful attempt to secure a boyfriend. In fact, my music collection has very little to do with my own desires at all – until I discover *Jagged Little Pill*.

Although I first hear it blasting in my mum's Saab convertible on the school

Alanis
Morissette

Alanis Morissette's music showed Natasha she could stick up for herself

run, I seek out my own copy in HMV four years after its release. It's the thrill that draws me in: the black and white parental advisory sticker on the front, the fact that Alanis is 'flicking a cigarette', singing about going down on a lover in a theatre and something called a 69. Buying it feels like hanging out with a much cooler, older girl who knows the things you aren't yet supposed to, but she might just fill you in. But from the moment I hear the first harmonica note on the opener, *All I Really Want*, the allure of explicit content is trivial. It's all about the music: the 13 songs that shake me by the shoulders and show me who I want to be.

When I press play, I am 14 and insecure, afraid to stand up for myself. Even when a boy two-times me, I pretend I'm okay. I say, 'Don't worry about it.' But Alanis? She doesn't just call her exes out on bad behaviour; she demands they acknowledge the impact it leaves on her. She shows up to 'bug [them] in the middle of dinner', breaks into their house to dance in the shower and reminds them of their broken promises with beautiful fury. On *You Oughta Know*, the album's masterpiece, she addresses the topic of her ex's new lover: 'And every time you speak her name does she know how you told me you'd hold me until you died / 'Til you died / but you're still alive.' By the time I shriek the last line, I'm not just singing by myself; I'm singing in unison with thousands of others who know what it feels like to be replaced by a shiny new lover and left with nothing but a story your ex wants to forget. Years before the word 'gaslit' became popular, Alanis was saying: I remember what you did and I'm going to make sure you do, too. To me, vengeance had never sounded so courageous, nor so much fun.

I memorise every line, every syllable, every harmony. I straighten my hair less, inspired by how Alanis swings her long, sometimes frizzy, curls around her head. In baggy T-shirts and jeans, she looks like she's having too much fun to worry about being anyone else's idea of sexy. Sometimes she sings so ferociously it's as if she's screaming.

ALANIS MORISSETTE

Natasha and her husband went to the concert together

The male critic who wrote Alanis 'strives for catharsis but often merely sounds histrionic' misses the point. As teenage girls, we already water down our emotions to avoid being called 'histrionic', 'attention-seeking', 'slutty'. Somewhere along the road to girlhood we've learned that dramatic, pissed off, sexual and confrontational are the worst things a girl can be. And yet here is a woman playing an electric guitar telling us we can be all of them.

Unsurprisingly, I wasn't the only one obsessed – *Jagged Little Pill* sold more than 33m copies – which was part of my learning curve, too. At school, the word 'mainstream' had been an insult, but *Jagged Little Pill* showed how joyous it could be to love things other people loved, too (and, more obviously, that things are popular because they're good).

After months of listening, I didn't go down on anyone in the theatre, but did I stop hiding anger. When a boy cheated on me, I called him, alongside another girl he'd wronged, and screamed Kelis's *I Hate You So Much Right Now* down the phone. We were sheepish the next day when we discovered his mum overheard us on the landline, but God, it had felt exhilarating.

It's all about the music: songs that shake me by the shoulders and show me who I want to be

Now, I hear traces of Alanis in other songs I listen to: *Right Through You* in Haim's *Man From The Magazine*, *You Oughta Know* in Taylor Swift's *All Too Well*. I feel them in relationships, too – when I date a man who resists growing up, I think of *Not The Doctor*; when I feel invisible in another relationship, *Wake Up* reminds me 'there's no fundamental excuse for the granted I'm taken for'. Long before I find a romantic relationship that is rooted in love not drama, Alanis gives me a hint of what it might look like in *Head Over Feet*: something healthy and rational; 'you ask how my day was'. The funny thing is, when I do find the love she describes, it turns out he's an Alanis fan, too. Years later, we watch her perform at the Shepherd's Bush Empire in London.

As a 34-year-old dancing with her husband screaming, 'You live, you learn,' I think about the teenage girl still somewhere inside me. And how grateful I am that she had these songs for company when she needed them the most.

Conversations On Love (Viking) by Natasha Lunn is out now in paperback

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALAMY, AMAZON, GETTY

Janice Wong continues to push the boundaries with her edible art installations

How I got here

CONFECTIONERY ARTIST AND CHOCOLATIER **Janice Wong** ON HER CAREER JOURNEY

Singaporean chef Janice Wong is one of Asia's most inspiring culinary talents and has won multiple Best Pastry Chef awards. As well as creating edible art installations and innovative desserts for clients, her own global brand, Janice Wong Singapore, is available in Selfridges.

I WAS COMPLETING MY DEGREE IN ECONOMICS WHEN I REALISED THAT FOOD – PARTICULARLY SWEET FOOD – WAS THE PASSION I WANTED TO MAKE A CAREER OUT OF. As a child growing up in Tokyo, I was surrounded by amazing confectionery and desserts, and have really vivid memories of Meiji chocolate, sweets, bubblegum and enormous choux buns. I knew I wanted to reimagine all the tastes I had such an affection for and start something really creative.

AFTER UNIVERSITY, I TRAVELLED THE WORLD FOR TWO YEARS, WORKING IN RESTAURANTS AND ATTENDING DIFFERENT CULINARY SCHOOLS. I began in Paris, where I studied patisserie, then went on to Oriol Balaguer in Barcelona, where I learned the craft of chocolate – a transformational experience in itself, as Spanish chefs are extremely imaginative. I then went to New York and Melbourne and worked for a Michelin-starred chef in Mallorca, trying to expand my knowledge and work out my own philosophies as a chef.

> *'Innovation has been at the heart of everything I have done'*

MY FIRST BUSINESS, A 2AM DESSERT BAR IN SINGAPORE, WAS A BIG TURNING POINT. I wanted to create an experience where people could enjoy a glass of wine or cocktail with a dessert in beautiful surroundings, and the location – a 1,000-square foot glass house with dramatically high ceilings – was key. It was a word-of-mouth hit, and looking back, it sparked the beginnings of everything. Back in 2007, there were very few Asian female chefs putting their name to things, so we were very, very busy during that first year.

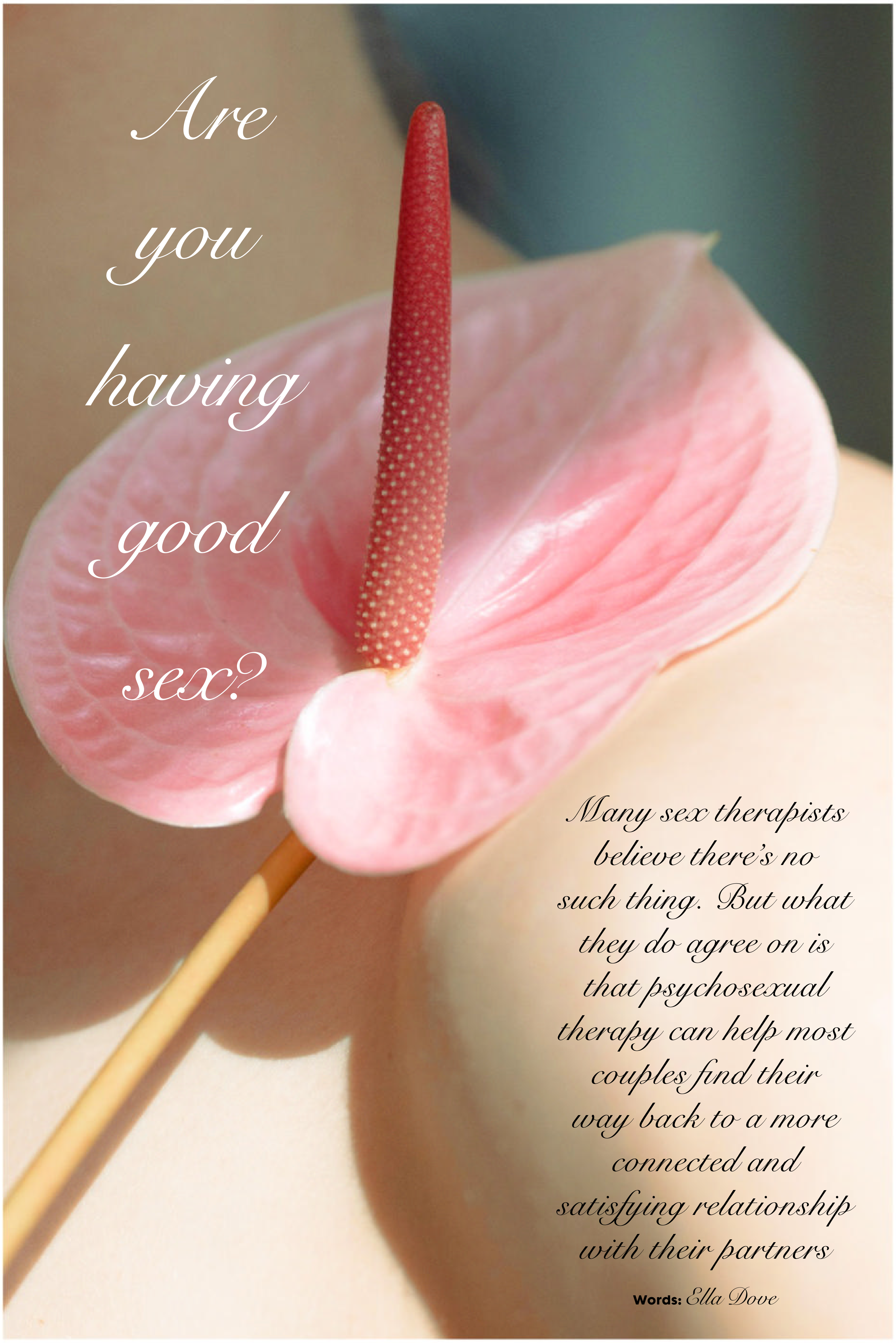
INNOVATION HAS BEEN AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING I HAVE DONE SINCE THE VERY BEGINNING. At the dessert bar, we were the first people to make chocolate crayons that you could eat along with the paper you'd drawn on, and I've continued to push boundaries with edible art installations. Nothing blows people's minds like coming to see a tunnel made of sweets or a ceiling made of marshmallow – and then being told you can eat it. It's a part of the job that I always find really exciting.

I'VE BEEN VERY FORTUNATE TO WORK WITH SOME MAJOR CLIENTS, INCLUDING CHANEL AND PRADA, BUT CREATING MY OWN BRAND HAS BEEN REALLY SPECIAL. My reputation has grown so much that I was invited on to *MasterChef Australia* in 2017 as a guest judge for the pressure tests. I made a cassis plum dessert that became the most famous dish of that series, and our dessert bars became very busy. Janice Wong Singapore has grown organically all over the world, and we're now stocked everywhere from Macau to London. Chocolate has always been my first love, and we've tried to remain really creative, even in retail.

EVEN NOW, IT AMAZES ME HOW DIFFERENT TASTES ARE GLOBALLY; WHAT WORKS FOR ONE CULTURE MAY NOT FOR ANOTHER. For example, in Singapore, customers do not like vegetables in their desserts, whereas in Japan, beetroot on your cake is very welcome! If I were to open a dessert bar in London, I'd be putting salted caramel everywhere – it's very well liked.

IT HAS DEFINITELY HELPED TO HAVE A BUSINESS BRAIN BEHIND ALL THE FLUFFY IDEAS. There are things I couldn't have achieved very easily without my degree in economics, such as the sustainability model for the business I'm working on now. During Covid-19, we made Singapore's first single origin bean-to-bar chocolate – until now, no one else had thought of planting cocoa in Singapore. It's very much another form of innovation – just one that requires a different part of my mind.

AS TOLD TO: BRYONY GOOCH



Are you having good sex?

Many sex therapists believe there's no such thing. But what they do agree on is that psychosexual therapy can help most couples find their way back to a more connected and satisfying relationship with their partners

Words: *Ella Dove*

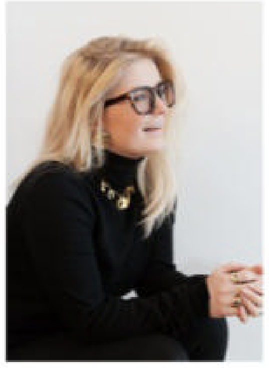
‘We need to get rid of the idea that sex is either “good” or “bad”,’ says psychosexual and relationship therapist Karen Aram, who has run her private practice in London for 10 years (karenaramtherapy.co.uk). ‘Otherwise we enter into this awful inner civil war of “I have to be really turned on, it’s got to be good”, as though there’s some kind of metric for what “good” means – there isn’t. Part of our role as sex therapists is to remove this unhelpful binary by looking at how any of our ideas about sex come to be the way they are.’

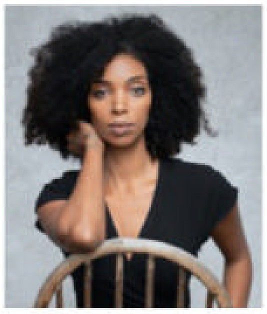
Often with roots of CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy), psychosexual therapy encourages us to explore how our thoughts are formed when it comes to sex, before slowly working to change our preconceived ideas. ‘We think our feelings and we feel our thoughts,’ Aram says. ‘People often ask me what I mean by that, and I’m talking about our mind-body connection. If we’re thinking about what’s for dinner during sex, for example, we’ll never tune in to our bodies – our thoughts have taken over our feelings.’

Issues and worries around sex are more common than you might think, and psychosexual therapy can be helpful to everyone. ‘You don’t have to be at crisis point,’ says Kate Moyle, psychosexual therapist and host of *The Sexual Wellness Sessions* podcast. ‘A lot of people feel they need to have a serious problem, but if you’re struggling with any aspect of sex, psychosexual therapy can be a good place to address that.’

So, are there things we can all learn? We asked three leading therapists to identify and explain the most common issues their clients face – and share how to navigate them.

Karen Aram, psychosexual and relationship therapist


Kate Moyle, psychotherapist and creator of The Sexual Wellness Sessions podcast


Dr Amani Zarroug, clinical psychologist, and psychosexual and relationship therapist

Performance anxiety

In modern society, comparison culture is everywhere and for many of us, this leads to worries about sexual performance, says Kate Moyle. ‘The sex we see through porn, films or on TV is not necessarily like the sex that we’re actually having in real life – it’s specifically designed to look good on camera.’ She adds that performance anxiety develops due to an inherent but unrealistic perfectionism: ‘Sex is one of the only areas of our lives where we form an idea that everyone should just know what they’re doing, but we rarely ask questions or open conversations about *how* to know what we’re doing.’

Often, clients will come to the therapist space expressing this very problem. ‘These people are in the room because what they’re doing has not been working for them,’ says Dr Amani Zarroug, a clinical psychologist and psychosexual and relationship therapist. ‘I want to find out if they’re tied to an idea that sex has to be a specific way. I then challenge that by pointing out that as soon as they start to “perform”, they’re doing what we call “spectatoring” – almost existing outside of their own body watching, so they’re no longer connected to their own pleasure.’

A really good exercise, experts agree, is myth busting. ‘By writing down our sexual beliefs on paper and asking, “Where did I learn that from?”, we can start to call into question certain ideas that we have, and think about where they come from,’ says Moyle. ‘Much of the time we’ve never really thought about where our core beliefs around pleasure stem from until it’s a problem, so actually questioning them is an important exercise.’

Discrepancy in desire

For Aram, who works predominantly with couples, desire discrepancy between partners – or different libido needs – is very common. ‘When people come to me, I will always start by looking at the backstory,’ she says. ‘I’ll call into question: Was it always like this, or has there been an

> *'Couples can get stuck in a cycle of blame and consequently pull away from everything that might lead to sex'*

emotional event that has triggered one partner to lose their drive?'

Issues around libido are particularly common when couples are trying to conceive, particularly during IVF, or struggling with infertility. 'However, it could also be that one partner has just never had a high sex drive, in which case it's about understanding that the person with the lower drive controls the amount of sex within a relationship.'

Moyle says that, in this case, the person with the lower sex drive is often left with little opportunity to really understand when they want sex, given that the other person wants it all the time. 'Couples can then get stuck in a cycle of blame and consequently pull away from everything that might lead to sex. This can be particularly problematic because the issue then just gets bigger.'

Another factor that therapists will look at is the longevity of the relationship. 'Spontaneous desire is over-represented in films and TV,' explains Moyle, 'when the reality is that lots of people, particularly in long-term relationships, have a more responsive desire style. This means that instead of the desire happening in anticipation of a sexual experience, it's often triggered by the start of the sexual experience – we start kissing and hugging, and then we start to feel turned on. Often, people in long-term relationships think they've lost all their desire when, in fact, they're just more responsive in this way.'

To this end, Moyle suggests carving out more time for intimacy. 'As therapists, we don't like the idea of scheduling sex, but we do recommend scheduling time to be physically intimate. We put time aside for planning holidays and calling friends, so we need to apply that same rule to our relationships.'

Avoidance and distance

All couples, Aram says, have an 'emotional sweet spot' when it comes to how intimate or distant they can cope with being. 'It's a fundamental human fear that we will be left or abandoned,' she explains, 'so when some couples become too far apart, they can feel inherently anxious and naturally start to withdraw and defend.' This often results in the other person feeling even more frozen out, and can manifest in them withdrawing touch and appreciative comments or compliments. 'They can then resort to safety behaviours, such as one deliberately going to bed early without the other,' she explains, 'until eventually there's no sweetness left.'

The approach to rebuilding a major rupture in a relationship needs to be taken very slowly. 'In therapy, I will often suggest starting safely with reconnection – whether that's the couple staying in the same room together after dinner, or hugging and looking into each other's eyes for three to five minutes. We're not looking specifically at arousal at this stage, but meeting discomfort in a safe environment.'

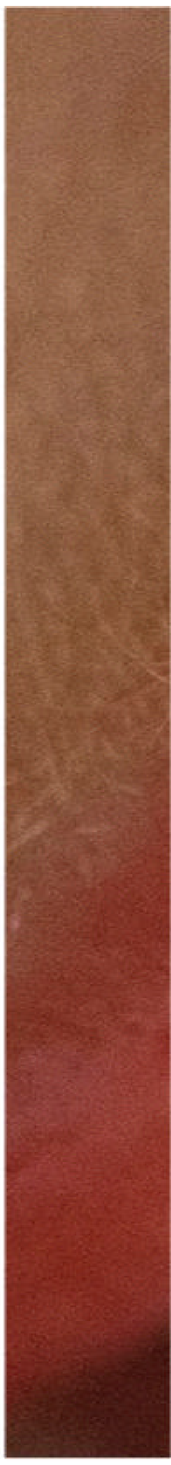
Dr Zarroug agrees with this gradual approach, citing a technique called 'sensate focus', aimed to improve intimacy, confidence and communication between partners, and shifting away from ingrained, goal-oriented sexual patterns that may not be serving the couple. 'Sensate focus is the gold-standard method for treating psychosexual issues,' she says. As part of it, couples must agree to a sex ban for the duration of the programme as they gradually reacquaint themselves with their bodies. 'In knowing it's not going to lead to sex, the programme removes pressure, so that couples can start to break whatever negative association they had before.'

Eventually, the exercises become sexual, but initially it's more about connecting with the sensual nature of your body and what it can offer you in terms of pleasure.

Body confidence

How we feel in our own bodies can have a big impact on our sex lives. However, very often, worries about body image come down to past experiences and psychoeducation, explains Dr Zarroug, such as 'women worrying that their vulvas don't look like those in porn films.' Normalising and understanding that not everyone loves every single thing about their body is a process, she says. 'I often do an exercise where I ask the person to name three parts of themselves that they like. I might then ask them to stand naked in front of a mirror at home, and talk to that part of themselves. The negative things we've been told about our bodies tend to weigh much more heavily than all the positive things we've heard, so focusing on the bits you do like often provides an emotional release.'

From there, Dr Zarroug says, she'll hone in on a client's perception of body image when it's in the specific context of sex. 'I ask, "when are you most self-conscious? Is it when you're in a particular position? Is it when there's lots



PHOTOGRAPHY: LAURENT CASTELLANI/BLAUBLUT-EDITION.COM

of light in the room?" In shedding light on those moments, we can start to focus on the areas they like more.'

'Learning what feels good for us is a big part of improving body confidence in sex,' adds Moyle. 'So I ask: "What are your good conditions for sex?" It might be that having sex with the light off feels comfortable for you because you're able to really relax and tune in to what's happening, or that mindfulness exercises help you to connect with your body more.'

Struggles with orgasm

'Difficulties orgasming are very common in women and it's something I see people worry about a lot,' says Aram. 'But orgasm can only happen when there is a certain point of tension and relaxation, like opposing forces. We have to be aroused, but we also have to be relaxed and allow the body to take over.'

'I start by getting people to write a pleasure journal,' says Moyle. 'They note down five things in their day that give them pleasure, whether it's putting on a really soft jumper, walking outside feeling the sun on their face, getting into bed with clean sheets, the first sip of coffee in the morning or a smile from a stranger. We're not very good at noticing small moments of pleasure – often it happens and we simply rush to the next thing, and it's the same with sex.'

Aram agrees with this mindful approach. 'I encourage an exploration of touch for pleasure,' she says. 'I've had women tell me they had an orgasm when their partner started stroking their coccyx at the bottom of their back, or the back of their neck while having sex. In reframing what we've been taught about orgasm and embracing the whole body as a potential touch zone, we can rebalance expectations around what we think our body should be doing, and focus on that feeling of pleasure and how to build it.'

Sometimes it's even a case of looking at breathwork, says Aram. 'A good tip is to try taking in more oxygen than you need to as you become more aroused,' she suggests. 'Trust me, you'll be surprised where you can go!'

To find a therapist, visit the College of Sexual and Relationship Therapists' website: cosrt.org.uk

Abigail met husband Robert when she joined the cast of a BBC Radio 4 comedy show

FALLING APART LAUGHING

When the jokes ran low in writer Abigail Burdess's marriage to comedian Robert Webb, the couple decided to try counselling. Little did they know it would take a terribly bad therapist to bring them back together

Four years ago, when things were dodgy between me and my husband, we did couples therapy with – let's call her Daphne. A small, dozy woman in an office over a garage, Daphne was so bad that we both took against her quite deeply and discovered a brand-new shared hobby in taking the mickey out of her. Trotting off to Caffè Nero after each session, we found ourselves competing over doing the best impression. 'You both use humour to deflect, don't you?' we'd say, folding our hands and cocking our heads to one side. Discussing Daphne was a blast. Bad couples therapy? I'd recommend it. In finding a therapist we both agreed was truly terrible, we somehow saved our marriage.

Like a third of us, I met my partner – the comedy writer and performer Robert Webb – at work. Back then, in 2003, I'd just finished my second show at the Edinburgh Comedy Festival and got a call from my agent to say someone called Olivia Colman couldn't do the second series of *Concrete Cow*, a BBC Radio 4 sketch show. In those days, filling Olivia Colman's shoes was a marginally less terrifying prospect. I auditioned and got the job.

At the read-through, I noticed a flirty blond called Robert Webb. He wasn't my type but was very funny and although I definitely didn't fancy him, I found myself trying, every chance I got, to make him laugh. At the cast drinks after the show, I plonked myself next to him, and when someone said something pretentious, he pointed at them in silent conspiracy with me, running his finger under his nose in a kind of 'I'm with stupid!' gesture. I was hooked.

The first time we kissed, in the back of a London taxi, the taxi driver quipped, 'When's the wedding?' Jokingly, I swore at him and we chatted all the way back home (Rob later told me that this was when he knew I was a keeper). The wedding turned out to be three years later. In the months before it, instead of moving in together, we travelled around Britain in a big gold tour bus. Robert was doing *The Two Faces Of Mitchell And Webb* with David Mitchell at the time – and I joined the cast. We were being paid to hang out together, making jokes!

Then we had a baby. Our worlds slowly started to diverge. Desperately trying to keep a freelance career going from home, I began chasing every audition and script commission. Meanwhile, Rob got seized by a breadwinning panic, taking every job he was offered. By the time we had our second baby, I was trying to breastfeed and write my first play (it ended up containing an angry rant about doing your husband's laundry). On *That Mitchell And Webb Look* – Rob's late-Noughties sketch show with David – we created a series of sketches called the 'Up Yours Parents', about a couple who hate each other but love their baby. They constantly shouted 'Up yours!' and gave each other the finger (and not in a good way). For

Couples therapy yielded some unexpected results for the pair

‘THE JOKES CONTAINED MORE TRUTH THAN EMOTING EVER COULD’

us, the jokes had become a way to express the unpalatable truths.

Then Rob suffered a heartbreaking series of bereavements. His coping mechanism wasn’t very healthy. Those of you who have read his excellent memoir, *How Not To Be A Boy*, may be aware of what the tabloids would call his ‘battle with booze’. I mean, it wasn’t much of a battle: the booze won pretty quickly, and it wasn’t really clear when battle commenced. No one yelled, ‘Charge!’ Comedy is a traditionally boozy industry. Eight pints a night isn’t an addiction so much as a ‘loosener’, and it was hard to tell where Rob crossed the line. He was functional (drunktional, if you will), turning up sober to work even when he was half-cut at home.

I’ve heard it said that a partner having an addiction is a bit like they’re having an affair. That certainly chimes with me. I missed him and I felt lonely. When he was off having a fine old time with Stella (his beer of choice), I sometimes dreamed of retaliating by having an affair myself (with Bud, presumably). Instead, I wrote a comedy about it. It was my job to cheer other people up! The sad thing was, I just couldn’t manage it with my husband.

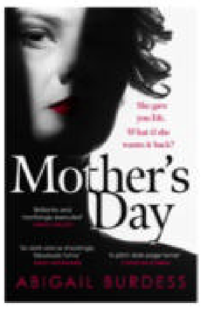
And so we stopped trying to make each other laugh. While plumbers’ partners will tell you they never fix the bathroom and chefs will say they never cook the dinner, we stopped joking around. When we were first going out, *Peep Show* – which Rob was in – had just started and I quickly grew sick of people telling me, ‘You must just laugh constantly! You must be rolling around every night!’ (not in the sack, you understand, just with all the laughter). But over the years, I had to admit they were right: for us, humour wasn’t just some nice added extra; it was our way of communicating. People say jokes get in the way of the real business of talking about how you feel, but for us they contained more truth than emoting ever could. It took one particularly joyless ‘date night’ for us to realise we were in trouble.

Which is how we arrived in the room above the garage, mutually despising Daphne. Looking back, maybe she wasn’t so terrible. Maybe, in fact, she was secretly a genius – the dozy act a cunning disguise to bring us together. Still, by accident or design, she helped us recover our willingness to make the other laugh – and just in time. Three weeks after our last session, Robert had a medical for the TV show *Back*, during which the doctor asked, ‘What are you doing about the heart murmur?’ He had a massive congenital heart defect, requiring life-saving surgery, and would need to be operated upon immediately.

Trying to keep everything normal for the kids, the night after I’d dropped Rob at the hospital I took them trick-or-treating (you’d be astounded how many Halloween costumes are based on slicing open a chest).

A whole load of surgery and six hours on a heart-lung bypass machine later, Rob was out of danger and I was allowed to tiptoe into ICU. Though I could not have been more thankful, I was terrified that the surgeons might have removed his essential Robert-ness – his sense of humour.

As he lay there, or something did – eight medical drains sprouting from what appeared to be his bloated grey corpse – I waited. Where had my husband gone? Was he still in there somewhere? And then I saw his erstwhile cadaver raise one shaking hand, run his finger under his nose and point at me in an ‘I’m with stupid!’ gesture. And I have never, ever laughed harder.



Mother’s Day (Headline) by Abigail Burdess is out now

PHOTOGRAPHY: KEVIN MURPHY

OUT OF OFFICE

Forget swapping out your Zoom background – with remote working here to stay, more of us than ever are choosing to log in from locations that feel, or indeed are, a million miles from home. Ella Dove investigates

Aside from the job, what do you prioritise in an employment contract these days? Hybrid working? Compressed hours? Unlimited holiday leave? Being fully remote? A few years ago, most of us could barely comprehend these terms, let alone see them as part of a 'package' we wanted to negotiate. But as the after-effects of the pandemic have taken hold and new ways to work have continued to emerge, with it has come a host of new policies and benefits. The latest nice-to-have? Location flexibility.

Unlike 'hush holidays' (the TikTok buzz term for slacking off on a secret holiday while keeping up the appearance of 'working from home' to your boss), location flexibility is a transparent agreement between employer and employee, allowing you to spend a period of time – often a defined number of weeks – working from anywhere in the world.

'This is an exciting option that is now more widely available for fully remote workers,' explains Sophie Wade, a workforce innovation specialist and author of the book *Empathy Works*. 'Over the last decade, we've seen how workplace flexibility boosts employee satisfaction and results in an increase in productivity. Offering this type of location flexibility, employers get engaged employees and can attract great talent. Employees get the opportunity to explore new cultures and experiences.'

> 'SINCE THE PANDEMIC, THE NUMBER OF DIGITAL NOMADS HAS TRIPLED'

According to the statistics, the desire to travel and work remotely – a 'workcation', if you will – is a burgeoning trend. Since the pandemic, the number of 'digital nomads' (the umbrella term for those working remotely from a number of locations) has risen hugely, with the number of workers flexing the perks of a permanent job contract to embrace this lifestyle tripling. Formerly a trend among millennials and Gen Z-ers who traditionally had more flexibility to take on freelance or short-term contracts due to their life stage, it's also thought that the 40 to 59 age group now accounts for 35% of this community worldwide.

'What wasn't an option for many people before has now become possible, and that's largely thanks to businesses introducing Work From Anywhere policies,' says Charlotte Davies, a careers expert at LinkedIn. Among the early adopters were Spotify, which launched its Work From Anywhere policy in early 2021, with Siemens, Airbnb and financial tech business Revolut following suit. Digital brands group RVU has also been operating its policy to great success for the last two years.

'Our Working From Anywhere policy enables you to work remotely from anywhere in the world for up to 30 days every year, and the feedback has been unanimously positive,' says Colin Loth, chief people officer for RVU. 'It's helped people fulfil travel dreams without having to take a sabbatical or career break, and from an employer's perspective, it's really helped us to encourage a work-life balance across the group.' It's RVU's hope that the scheme will also help recruit and retain the best talent: 'Candidates frequently call out the policy when they apply, and it's one of our most popular benefits with current employees – around 40% of our London team have already taken it up.'

Chirpa Santhanam, who works for the location intelligence and fraud prevention company GBG, took advantage of her company's policy allowing her to spend 90 days a year working at a location of her choice last year, spending three months in Southern India. 'Having an office space set up next door to a 1,000-year-old temple, from which I would hear the trumpeting of a temple elephant while I worked, was a totally different experience,' she says. 'At work, my role involves a lot of interaction with people across the globe, so I'm used to working across multiple time zones. It was a win-win for everyone.'

For SEO specialist Llauren Cavanagh, working remotely from other countries has enabled her to roam the world, packing in several locations while she works. So far, she has spent time in more than 10 locations, including Chicago, Lisbon, Croatia, Peru and Buenos Aires. 'Before I started travelling, I was being trained for a big promotion that would have required me to work in the office four days a week, so I passed up the opportunity to work on a shorter-term project-by-project basis, which allowed me the flexibility to work remotely,' she explains. 'The sacrifice was 100% worth it – although I'd likely have ended up earning twice my salary, I'm achieving a different dream and lifestyle.'

With many countries still suffering the long-term economic effects of the pandemic, an increase in tourist footfall and support for local communities is also a huge benefit for governments around the world. Currently, 52 countries – everywhere from Southeast Asia to the Caribbean and Europe – offer a digital nomad visa allowing visitors to stay and work remotely for a foreign-based employer for an average duration of 12 months (with the opportunity to extend some visas by one or more years). Countries that launched their visa schemes post-pandemic include Portugal, Croatia and Greece, with Spain becoming one of the latest to join the club in February this year.

To make things even easier for nomads, the trend has even led to the rise of the 'digital nomad village' – specific co-living and co-working areas with facilities adapted to suit remote workers and offering the chance for collaboration and community. Accommodation is often built into the package, and many nomad villages will help with everything from visas and taxes to education for children.

The first digital nomad village in the world was launched in February 2021 in Ponta do Sol, Madeira. A village of 8,200 inhabitants on the south coast, it's a place of sunshine and scenery, framed by green-covered mountains with picture-postcard white buildings, sandy beaches and some of the warmest year-round temperatures.

Funded by Startup Madeira with support from the Madeiran government, the aim of the Digital Nomads Madeira Islands project is to integrate digital nomads with local communities, utilising spaces and resources that already exist, such as hotels, cafes and cultural centres for them to live and work in.

Founder and project consultant Gonçalo Hall had the idea for the village following his own experiences working as a digital nomad while running Remote Europe, a jobs board for remote roles. 'In Europe, we have a big problem of depopulation – everybody's moving towards big cities. But when you go to a city, although you'll meet people, it's very hard to make a connection,' he explains. 'In a digital nomad village, you'll see the same people over and over again – we have one main street, so you get to know the people working at the cafes. We also have a Slack channel and we organise about 30 events a week, such as workshops and fitness classes. People say loneliness is one of the biggest issues of the digital nomad lifestyle, but you'll never feel lonely here.'

The project has so far welcomed people from 133 countries, with more than 1,000 nomads spread across the island. According to Hall, '80% of people who come to our digital nomad village are remote workers who work full-time for a company; the other 20% work for themselves. It's a really eclectic mix – you could be having lunch with an investor from Japan, a singer from the US and a software developer from Germany.'

For Cristina Muntean, 41, a career strategist, moving from her home of Prague to Madeira's nomad village in October 2022 has been life-changing. In Prague, Muntean was exhausted by the fatigue of constant in-person service delivery and felt she needed a reset. Now she rents a two-bedroom apartment in Ponta do Sol, and when she's not working there will head to one of the nearby co-working spaces or terraces by the beach.

'A typical day is waking up a bit before 6am, taking my dog for a long walk by the ocean and enjoying a cup of coffee and breakfast on my balcony as the sun rises,' she says. 'My mental health has improved drastically since being here.' She has also met many like-minded people; Muntean describes the nomads at the village as a mix of both employees and freelancers, including innovation managers in large corporate energy groups, digital marketers, web designers, lawyers and accountants. 'What defines us is the lifestyle,' she says. 'Whether we're single, married or have kids, we're all here to experience something different.'

Although, by and large, digital nomads are workers without children, already villages are starting to cater for families. Elodie Ferchaud is head of demand generation at Boundless Life, a family-centred nomad company with bases in Greece, Portugal, Italy and Indonesia. As well as offering family-friendly accommodation and side-by-side co-working and education spaces, Boundless Life's education packages offer a children's curriculum based on the Finnish education system, allowing consistency across countries. 'Research says that 26% of digital nomads have a family,' Ferchaud says, 'and that trend looks set to continue as villages start to organise proper education and schooling pop-ups.'

> 'IN A DIGITAL NOMAD VILLAGE, YOU'LL SEE THE SAME PEOPLE OVER AND OVER'

With rural settings, islands and cities across the world all embracing the new remote working culture, there really is a perfect set-up for everyone. For Llauren Cavanagh, it's not just about lush greenery, palm trees and sunsets, though. 'Meeting other digital nomads has been brilliant for networking in business,' she says. 'Being able to learn from others in a similar or completely different field by working alongside them is not only beneficial for me but also for my company – and I've been able to share my knowledge with others, too.'

'With work options continuing to expand and evolve, the future of work is exciting,' agrees Sophie Wade. Whether you're on a Teams call in Toronto or Zooming in from Zanzibar, there's a whole world out there just waiting to be explored. Now, where did we put our passports?

PACK YOUR BAGS

Need inspiration? Here's our pick of the best digital nomad village locations around the world

NOMAD CITY – GRAN CANARIA, SPAIN

Not only is Gran Canaria blessed with over 300 days of sunshine each year, its green initiatives and low cost of living mean its quality of life score is in the top 5% worldwide (and that's without mentioning its beautiful beaches, dramatic volcanic landscape and world-class hiking trails). Among its four locations across the island, Nomad City offers a network of hubs to float between, plus the opportunity to island-hop to a further location on La Palma. Self-catering accommodation ranges from The Roof, a spacious penthouse, to The Artisans, a three-bed villa and one-bed apartment that share a patio and workspace. From around £690 a month including accommodation (nomadcity.org).

NOMA COLLECTIVE – VARIOUS LOCATIONS

For those who want a taste of the digital nomad lifestyle but may not be able to commit long-term, digital nomad travel company Noma Collective runs three- and four-week group co-working trips to its nomad villages in locations as varied as Belize, Argentina, Kenya and Antigua. Booking includes airport pick-ups and drop-offs, a private en-suite room, a portable personal hotspot with loaded data and the opportunity to enjoy group events and activities, from dinners at local restaurants to wildlife watching. From £1,761 for 22 nights (noma-collective.com).

TRENTO REMOTE – TRENTO, ITALY

Keen to support its nomads wherever possible, this village located just south of the Dolomites will assist with everything from schools (Italian and English) to yoga classes and gym subscriptions. It also teaches Italian-language courses as part of the package, and will even help you pay your taxes and get a visa. Once they've found your fully furnished apartment, you'll be given access to the local co-working spaces, all while taking in the air in Trento, with its picturesque medieval and Renaissance architecture. When you're ready for the mountains, lakes, vineyards, ski resorts and mountain-bike trails, plus some of the best rock climbing on the planet, Trento will organise excursions. From around £265 a month including accommodation (trentoremote.com).

ADDITIONAL WORDS: BRYONY GOOCH. PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

NOMADX – SÃO VICENTE, CAPE VERDE

In Mindelo, a port city in the northern part of São Vicente (one of Cape Verde's 10 idyllic islands), you'll have the opportunity to work and swim with sea turtles every day. The cherry on the cake? Remote workers in Cape Verde are exempt from income tax. Keen to boost local economies, NomadX has made it part of its mission to work closely with governments to support community projects. It also partners with the rental site Flatio, offering nomads the opportunity to handpick their own accommodation at a discount. From £530 a month including accommodation (nomadx.com).

BOUNDLESS LIFE – SANUR, BALI, INDONESIA

Following the success of locations in Tuscany, Sintra and the Greek island of Syros, Boundless Bali is the newest addition to the network's collection of family-friendly nomad villages, set to open in July. Located close to the capital of Denpasar, Sanur stretches 5km along the southeast coast, incorporating pristine sandy beaches backed by lush greenery and a town with a long promenade and cycle path. Here, everything is geared up for families, including Boundless's nature-based education programme for kids, which is inspired by the world-renowned Finnish system (running five days a week from 9am-3pm, with meals and field trips included). Accommodation consists of one-, two- or three-bedroom homes, practically furnished for families. From around £1,865 a month including accommodation (bit.ly/redbali).

COLIVING FRILINGUE – BRAUNWALD, SWITZERLAND

If you always fancied doing a ski season but never got the chance, Coliving Frilingue's Swiss site, Bourg St Pierre, offers in its package a ski pass for one year that can be used at its three ski resorts. Depending on the season, you may find a chef cooking in the co-working hub's community kitchen, where you can also cook and swap recipes with fellow nomads from all over the world. Plus, there's the opportunity to join knowledge and skill exchanges between members of the local community and residents, which take place through weekly mastermind and mentoring sessions. Thermal baths, hiking, canyoning and paddling in the lakes… It barely seems worth mentioning that there are also phone booths, meeting rooms and free tea and coffee in the co-working space. From around £280 for two weeks including shared accommodation (coliving.frilingue.ch).

Drama queen

FROM *ALLY McBEAL* TO *30 ROCK*, JANE KRAKOWSKI HAS CEMENTED HERSELF AS HOLLYWOOD'S GO-TO GIRL FOR HIGH COMEDY, HIGH KICKS AND HIGH NOTES. BUT, AS SHE TELLS CHARLOTTE OLIVER, SHE'S NOT DONE CHALLENGING HERSELF YET

Highly strung, self-absorbed and diva-ish. No, I'm not talking about the actor Jane Krakowski, but rather the slew of hilariously over-the-top characters she's brought to our screens. Think Elaine, the grandstanding legal assistant in the 1990s TV series *Ally McBeal*; or Jenna, the comedy sketch actor whose egotistical antics in *30 Rock* make even the most demanding prima donnas blush; or Jacqueline, the wealthy socialite in *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, who instructs her son's new nanny: 'Get me up at 10am, but don't wake me up.'

Clearly, she's a natural at narcissism, so I'm surprised when I'm greeted over the phone by a refreshingly modest Krakowski. Speaking to me at the crack of dawn from her New York home, she politely asks if I can give her a second to grab some water and tells me that she's delighted to hear my London accent. 'I miss visiting London and being in England so much,' she sighs.

A self-confessed 'musical theatre nerd' who got her big break on Broadway in Andrew Lloyd Webber's roller-skating musical, *Starlight Express*, Krakowski's sweet spot lies in the combination of high comedy and high notes – making her latest project for Apple TV+, *Schmigadoon!*, the perfect vehicle. The first series, which aired in 2021, followed a backpacking couple, Josh (Keegan-Michael Key) and Melissa (Cecily Strong), who happen upon a magical town trapped in a golden age-style musical. Krakowski plays the all-singing, all-dancing Countess, in a nod to the Baroness from *The Sound Of Music*. In series two, airing this April under the new title *Schmicago*, Josh and Melissa are back, only this time they're entering a different magical world based on musicals from the 1970s. Krakowski plays Bobbie Flanagan, a sultry lawyer who is the perfect blend of louche and litigation. The skirts are short and the tales are tall. 'Bobbie really tickled me,' she says. 'Before going on set, I'd finish in hair and makeup, looking vampy with my garter belt showing and my legs out, and I'd look in the mirror and purr: "I'm an attorney at law!" I'm definitely representing the sexy, Chicago part of *Schmicago*.'

'I'm representing the sexy, Chicago part of Schmicago'

The show, she explains, 'went directly to the heart of me. It's so niche, but it's exactly the niche I love – especially this season, as we're focusing on the Bob Fosse-era of musicals that made me want to be in this world. Plus, I get to work with people like Kristin Chenoweth and Alan Cumming. Everyone brings their A-game; it's a wonderful challenge to get to play among them.'

Born in the small town of Parsippany-Troy Hills, New Jersey, to two musical theatre aficionados, Ed and Barbara, Krakowski was practically raised on the stage. 'My dad was a chemical engineer and my mum was a teacher, but they were both incredibly creative people and community theatre was their passion,' she recalls. 'They couldn't afford babysitters, so they just brought me along. I have pictures of me backstage in a crib, so it's not surprising that it had such an enormous impact – it just triggered something in me.'

Aged nine, Krakowski went to an open audition for a variety show called *The Milliken Breakfast Show* at New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel. 'I joined a queue of 500 girls, all ready to go in and sing our 16 bars,' she remembers. 'I sang *Hey! Look Me Over!* from *Wildcat* and, somehow, got picked. It was incredible – especially as I got to work with my Broadway heroes. At the end of a day of rehearsals, instead of sitting in traffic back to New Jersey, my mum and I would get standing tickets to see a show. I remember being in awe watching Chita Rivera in *Chicago*. At the curtain call, she threw a rose at me and that was it. I thought: "I'm in!"'

It didn't take long for the would-be star to land on Broadway herself. Following her debut role as the original Dinah the Dining Car in *Starlight Express* when she was just 18, Krakowski's stage career took off. She remembers the late 1980s and 1990s as 'magical and amazing' – and television producers soon took notice. In 1997, she was cast in a new legal comedy-drama, *Ally McBeal*, following the courtroom, office and personal dramas of a group of lawyers in Boston.

Krakowski and the 30 Rock cast (left); Amy Sedaris and Krakowski in Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt (middle left)

The show made a splash – loved and critiqued in equal measure for its sometimes stereotypical depiction of 'melodramatic, men-obsessed' women. As Ally's free-spirited and gossipy assistant, Elaine – who, among her memorable storylines, invented the wrinkle-defying 'face bra' – Krakowski won a legion of fans and got her first taste of being at the forefront of pop culture. 'It was such a water cooler moment,' she recalls. '*Ally McBeal* was my first TV show, and I didn't really know how much it was going to change my life – especially because we filmed nine episodes before it even aired. Then, one day after it hit TV screens, I was driving to set and heard the morning radio station analysing an episode from the night before. They were talking about the short skirts and fantasy elements of the show – that's when I realised the influence it was having.'

Did she keep hold of any of Elaine's outlandish inventions, which included multi-coloured condoms and a toilet seat warmer, I wonder? 'If I'm honest, the one thing I did take home was the face bra – with permission!' she laughs. 'It was just such an iconic creation.'

By the time *Ally McBeal* came to a close in 2002, Krakowski was fielding offers across the board. She continued to perform on screen and stage, winning a Tony Award for her performance as Carla in *Nine* and relocating to the West End for a year to play Miss Adelaide in *Guys And Dolls*. Then Tina Fey came calling, casting Krakowski in two of TV's most memorable roles: *30 Rock*'s Jenna Maroney and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*'s Jacqueline Voorhees.

Both women are similarly stuck-up and self-absorbed, but the genius lies in Krakowski's delivery and deft comic timing. 'I don't think anyone ever wakes up saying: "I'm going to be a narcissist today,"' she reflects, 'so I always tried to approach both Jenna and Jacqueline from the positive – in that they always saw the positives in themselves. They were both so well drawn on the page, too, so it was easy to get a grasp of who they were. I look back at the incredible jokes and how many were written per page – it was such a gift.'

Her modesty overlooks the acclaim she received – clocking up four Emmy nominations for *30 Rock* and another one for *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*. Clearly, she's suited to Tina Fey's writing, delivering outrageous jokes with deadpan wit. 'Listen up, fives, a 10 is speaking,' she proclaims as Jenna in a now oft-quoted scene. Does she plan to work with Fey again? 'I only hope so!' she says. 'I just really relate to her work. There's an innate collaboration that just clicks.'

For someone who's starred in such acclaimed shows, Krakowski successfully eschews public scrutiny and is one of few actors without social media. She prefers to lead a relatively private life in New York with her 12-year-old son, Bennett, whose father is British fashion designer Robert Godley. The former couple split in 2013 and Krakowski has since reportedly found love again with the renowned architect David Rockwell.

She politely dodges questions about her love life, but the one person she will wax lyrical about is her son. 'Once Bennett was born, not one decision has been made without him being at the forefront of my mind,' she says. 'I'm now entering the pre-teen years, so I'm asking mums for advice and reading books. I just love seeing him develop into the young man he's becoming. He's singular, unique and a super-fun kid. It's a learning experience every day.'

Does she see him following in her footsteps? 'I'm learning as a parent how your child can be different from you – and how important it is to give him room to be his own person,' she muses. 'He plays a lot of instruments, but he also loves sports and fashion. He even makes his own clothes. Overall, he's just a very creative kid. I don't know where he'll land, but he'll always have my full support.' Lockdown was a special time for the pair; Krakowski found homeschooling 'an eye-opening opportunity to learn much more about my son and how he learns things', while Bennett proved invaluable during an at-home recording of *30 Rock*. 'We filmed a special episode over Zoom and he was my helper,' she says. 'At the end of the episode, Jenna is singing a song and a fan magically comes on and blows her hair as if she's Beyoncé. That was actually my son under the desk, holding the fan out of view. I'd said to him beforehand: "Alright, kid, the fan has to hit with exact comic timing," and he nailed it! It was pretty great to share that with him.'

With the Flintstones In Viva Rock Vegas cast (middle right); Lucy Liu, Jane Krakowski and Calista Flockhart in Ally McBeal (right)

'I'm at a point where I want to keep learning, developing and becoming a better and broadly diverse performer'

While Krakowski has clearly experienced her fair share of happy moments, she's also been dealt some blows along the way. In 2016, she lost her beloved father, following an almost 10-year battle with vascular dementia. She's since turned her attention towards raising awareness and money for dementia research. 'It was very hard to watch a loved one go through that,' she says, her voice breaking at the thought. 'It was the first time I realised that I was part of the "sandwich generation" – raising a young child and helping my elderly parents at the same time. Nobody was more creative than my father,' she adds. 'He taught himself to play the piano and do magic; he had so many creative hobbies outside of his really smart job, so it was hard to see someone who could do all that have their brain slowly disappear. My hope now is just that we can get more research and more treatment for families going through it.'

As for what's ahead, Krakowski's hunger to perform hasn't waned. 'I want to continue to be challenged,' she says. 'I'm at a point where I want to keep learning, developing and becoming a better and more broadly diverse performer.' Is there a part that she's desperate to play? 'Actually, there are many – but whenever I say them, they don't manifest,' she laughs, 'so now I don't say them out loud!'

Schmigadoon! returns to Apple TV+ for season two on 5th April

PHOTOGRAPHY: TRUNK ARCHIVE/ PATRIC SHAW, ALAMY

GET IN (MENTAL) SHAPE

Should we be treating our emotional wellbeing the same way we do our physical health, with regular workouts? From improving emotional intelligence to increasing our resilience, here is an exercise class for the inside

You've nailed the physical activity, have fine-tuned your nutrition and finally unlocked an evening routine that delivers seven hours of unbroken sleep. But how do you become the person you aspire to be on the inside? The person who can navigate a break-up with their emotions intact, let down a close friend with grace, and collaborate with an infantile colleague without sliding into angry parent mode. Enter: mental fitness. The awkward and sometimes painful work that you can't track with an app. Spending time on a hearty mental-fitness practice can create more long-term benefits for your mind and body than virtually anything else you do. And we're not just referring to meditation. We spoke to experts who either train people to become mentally fit or study mental health for a living to find out what it takes to forge greater inner strength, and they all spoke of three things: emotional intelligence, vulnerability and resilience.

FINE-TUNE YOUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

At its core, emotional intelligence is about understanding yourself (and other people) better by recognising how you really feel

The skill of emotional intelligence lies in the ability to identify your emotions and understand how you're responding to them – and doing it without judging yourself, says Susan David, psychologist, Harvard Medical School lecturer and author of *Emotional Agility: Get Unstuck, Embrace Change And Thrive In Work And Life.* At its best, emotional intelligence – aka EQ or 'emotional quotient' – might look like this: over dinner with friends, your partner makes a dismissive remark about your ignorance. They were trying to be playful, but you notice your body is tingling; you know that means you're feeling ashamed, which makes you angry. You know that you often felt inferior academically when you were younger – and remember that your partner had similar issues and might be projecting their shame on to you. Having speed-processed the data, you explain your feelings – they apologise. Same scenario, minus the EQ? Partner makes remark. You go silent, but burn with anger. No one apologises. You sleep apart, feel utterly disconnected and never talk about it – until the next flare-up. Paying attention to what's going on and accepting that your feelings aren't good or bad, they just are, is the first step to processing your emotions and deciding how to act on them. Building EQ helps you relate to others better; you develop empathy and the ability to listen without judgement. EQ also helps you develop emotional agility – the skills to adapt and make changes in yourself and your world.

IMPROVE YOUR SELF-EVALUATION

Stop ignoring your feelings

When you're experiencing an emotion you don't like, such as disappointment, don't pretend you're not. Instead, accept that you'll feel difficult emotions, says Dr David. 'This changes the relationship you have with them,' she says. 'It boosts your level of wellbeing and brings you a sense of connection with yourself.' Basically: stop lying to yourself about how you feel.

See emotions as data

After you identify a feeling, ask yourself what it might be telling you. If you're frustrated by how bored you are at work, that might be a signal that you value learning and growth and don't get enough of it, says Dr David. Recognising the feeling gives you the opportunity to figure out what to do about it.

Be specific

When someone asks how you are, go beyond big labels such as 'sad'. The clearer you are, the more those feelings help you know what problem to address. Dr David gives the example of a client who, when asked about their job, replied that they were angry. Pushed for more, they said, 'Maybe I'm scared that I'm not going to be effective.' Specifics bring on change.

THE MENTAL FITNESS BOOK CLUB

13 Things Mentally Strong Women Don't Do by Amy Morin. The author finds common character traits in inspiring women from all walks of life.

***Emotional Agility* by Susan David. An academic approach to telling your inner critic to do one. It will help you identify thought patterns that aren't working.**

Why Has Nobody Told Me This Before? by Dr Julie Smith. Written by a jobbing clinical psychologist, you'll be screaming its title as you read.

THE MENTAL FITNESS WATCHLIST

The Power Of Vulnerability With Brené Brown Brown's TedxHouston talk is an ace intro to vulnerability.

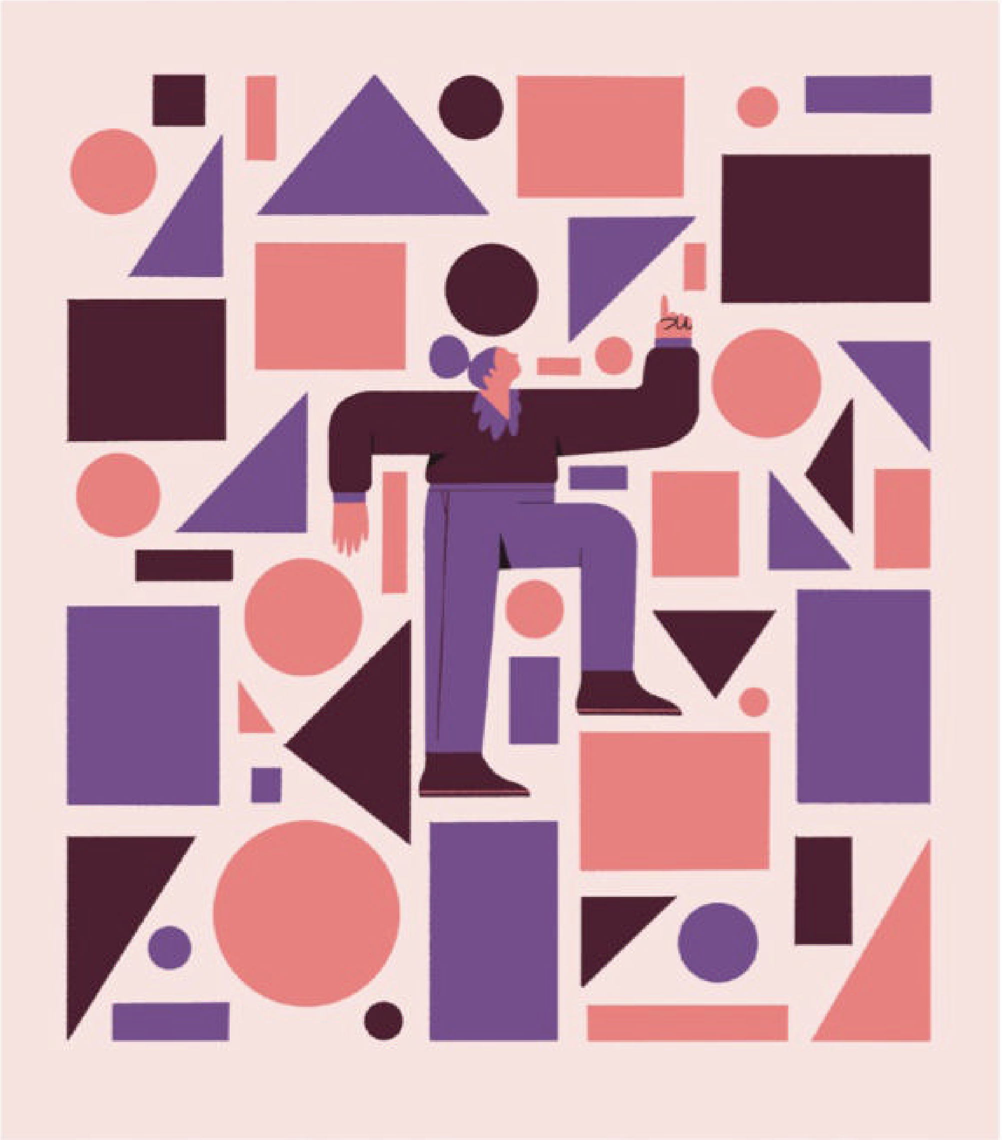
Developing A Growth Mindset With Carol Dweck This YouTube series helps you reframe your thoughts.

Perfectionism Holds Us Back. Here's Why A TED talk from recovering perfectionist Charly Haversat.

TAP INTO YOUR VULNERABILITY

What some see as a weakness, others consider a superpower

Ask any emotional wellbeing expert how to become more courageous and they'll tell you it begins with vulnerability. It's exposing your truest feelings – anger, fear, shame – despite the judgement you think you might receive. Dr Gervais defines vulnerability as 'the courage to be authentic, the courage to be true'. In your career this might look like being asked to take on responsibilities that you don't feel capable of delivering. Leaning into your vulnerability means admitting this and asking for support from those around you to upskill. Choosing not to admit your weakness and instead burying your emotions eradicates your confidence from the inside. It can feel counterintuitive, but communicating your own fears can also encourage those around you to share theirs, creating a more open and collaborative environment. And, most importantly, one that's based on mutual trust. In short: having the courage to be vulnerable is the first building block to growth.



INCREASE YOUR RESILIENCE

When life gets hard, resilience is what keeps you going, but not by simply flipping off your emotional switch.

When the going gets tough, you find ways to recalibrate and thrive. Not the catchiest of mantras, but this idea is the backbone of resilience. 'It's about adjusting and adapting to a challenging environment, be that internal or external,' says performance psychologist Michael Gervais. 'It's moving forwards as opposed to being set back and using internal skills when something is pushing you off-balance.'

The first step to building resilience is framing the way you perceive a setback. Instead of seeing it as failure and absorbing the negative emotions that go with it, view it as an opportunity for a way forward or a chance to learn something that will allow you to grow. Remind yourself of challenges you've overcome, or look back at the path that got you where you are today: the redundancies that led to better jobs, or the break-ups that freed you to enter healthier relationships.

While we can't control the events around us, we can control the way we react to them, so by choosing not to bring shame or self-flagellation into a situation and instead seeing it as a chance to recalibrate and move in another direction, we can find value in even the toughest of circumstances.

Of all of the tenets of mental fitness, resilience feels the most hardwired – as if you're either born with endless reserves of it, or you're not. But the reality is different. Resilience can be learned – and it begins with seeing setbacks as opportunities.

LET YOUR GUARD DOWN

Ask for help

Perhaps your home life is affecting your work. 'Be upfront with your team,' says Dr Corey Martin, founder of leadership consultancy Innovations in Resilience. Don't share everything, but letting them know you have a lot going on can be a valuable chat for everyone.

Don't aim for perfect

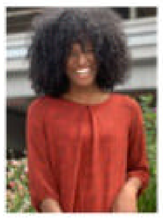
The veneer of perfection is an armour against people finding out what's inside. 'Strive for improvement instead,' says Dr Martin. 'Just aim to do better tomorrow than you did today.'

Engage with your inner critic

Listen to what the voice inside your head is saying to you. 'Take a piece of paper and write that stuff down,' Dr Martin says. Ask yourself if anyone who cares about you would ever say those things. Try to speak to yourself as you would a best friend, not a saboteur.

ILLUSTRATIONS: MICHAL BEDNARSKI

THE ECO INFLUENCER



OUR COLUMNIST ARMELLE FERGUSON SHARES HER TOP TIPS TO MAKE LIFE A LITTLE BIT GREENER

MARKET DAYS

I love to support a local community by heading off to a market or farm shop on holiday. If you're enjoying a staycation this year, a good resource for finding local farmers' markets and farm shops is farminguk.com (just click on Farm shops), but I also love The Makers Market, which hosts artisan markets across the North West (themakersmarket.co.uk). In London, Hackney Flea Market is always my go-to – now at sites across the capital as well as Hackney (hackneyfleamarket.com).

KIMONO, £260, orchardmoon.com

RESPONSIBLE ROBES

Right now, I'm wearing my Orchard Moon Peach Palms Kimono Robe pretty much every day, in the comfort of my living room or as a cover-up to slip over swimwear. The smooth, soft fabric could be mistaken for silk, but in fact it is 100% plant based and sustainably sourced, making it easy to care for at home and cruelty free. A safe bet for a responsible wardrobe.

SPF 25 MINERAL SUNSCREEN, £27.49, UpCircle Beauty

RAYS OF SUNSHINE

As someone from the Caribbean, I was stunned to learn that wearing sunscreen in the sea can harm our planet's coral reefs. Many sunscreens contain oxybenzone, which can bleach reefs and impair growth, harming the ocean's ecosystem. Thankfully, brands like UpCircle Beauty are tackling this problem with formulas that are reef-safe and dermatologically approved: a must-have for me is the SPF 25 Mineral Sunscreen, which uses naturally derived zinc oxide to protect skin and aloe vera to soothe. It's also vegan-friendly and comes in a glass jar with an aluminium lid, making it easy to recycle or re-use.

KETCHUP WITH A KICK

If you fancy something a little bit different, River Cottage's new organic ketchups, developed in partnership with organic food producer 9 Meals From Anarchy, are on point. There are five flavours: Tomato, Rhubarb, Mushroom, Squash and my favourite, Beetroot (perfect paired with crispy fried tofu and steamed vegetables). Palm-oil free, gluten-free and containing 10% sugar or less, with recyclable bottles and biodegradable labels, these are good for our taste buds and good for our planet.

KETCHUP, £3.75 each, ninemealsfromanarchy.co.uk

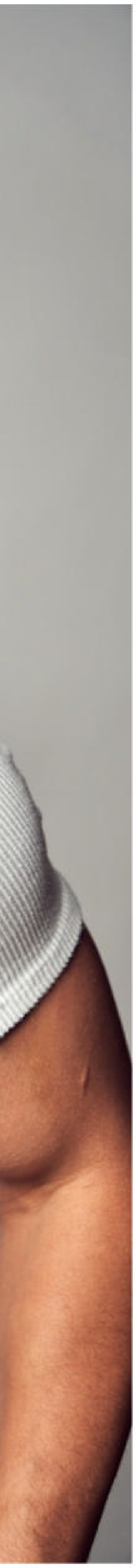
PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

FROM SPENDING NIGHTS AT THE OFFICE TO FINDING LOVE AND CONNECTION, STEVEN BARTLETT'S LIFE – AND MINDSET – HAVE UNDERGONE A SEA CHANGE IN RECENT YEARS. HERE, HE TELLS ELLA DOVE HOW HE'S FINALLY FOUND FULFILMENT

Enter the Dragon

Steven Bartlett loves, as he puts it, 'a deep chat'. 'I think I'm happy,' the entrepreneur, *Dragons' Den* star and host of headline-hitting podcast *The Diary Of A CEO* muses within minutes of introducing himself via Zoom. 'I always reflect on the Japanese concept of Ikigai – the idea that fulfilment comes when you find something you love, something you're good at, something the world needs and something you can be remunerated for. Passion, mission, profession and vocation – that's what I believe I've found with the podcast.'

The podcast in question now regularly amasses more than 10m monthly listeners. It sees him interview some of the world's biggest names across entertainment, sports, politics and business, from Richard Branson to Stephen Fry to former *Love Island* star Molly-Mae Hague. Many high-profile guests choose the podcast as a platform, including Matt Hancock, who gave his first interview to Bartlett after stepping down as Health Secretary.



PHOTOGRAPHY: OLIVIA SPENCER

Recent favourite guests include Davina McCall, who showed ‘vulnerability, humour, wisdom and a remarkable story’, and Gary Brecka, a human biologist whose job for 20 years was predicting, to the nearest month, when people would die. Bartlett’s dream guests are Michelle Obama and Elon Musk – ‘to find out if he’s happy’.

Happiness is a topic we circle back to frequently. It’s something Bartlett has learned a lot about over the years, from devoting his 20s to building businesses and wealth (he called his 2021 memoir *Happy Sexy Millionaire* because that’s what he aspired to be) to realising that material gain brings little joy. ‘If you’d asked me when I was 18 what kind of life I’d be living at 30, I’d have thought it would be pretty extravagant,’ he smiles. ‘But in different chapters of your life, I think your psychology changes. What makes me happy now is meaningful connection to other humans.’

The youngest of four siblings, Bartlett grew up in Plymouth, having moved from Botswana when he was a baby. His family struggled financially and he was one of very few people of colour at his school, meaning his childhood was dominated by a feeling of otherness and a desire to fit in. ‘I never would have described myself as insecure but, looking back, I definitely was,’ he reflects.

‘I wanted to conform in every possible way, whether it was my hairstyle, my outfits or wanting the things my friends had. I’d go to great lengths to be validated by my school friends and hide the ways I was different.’ He’d even make up what Christmas presents he received. ‘The fear of saying we didn’t get any presents for that particular Christmas was hard. I just wish I could have accepted myself a bit more,’ he says.

‘I REMEMBER FEELING REALLY LONELY WHEN I WAS 23 OR 24, BUILDING MY BUSINESS’

A born entrepreneur, Bartlett cut his first deal at school when he convinced a local business to supply vending machines for free. He also organised his school prom and a trip to Thorpe Park. And yet he was never bothered about academic achievements; in fact, his attendance dipped so low that he was expelled. ‘I had a hypothesis that I wouldn’t need good grades to be successful in life because I had that skill of being able to create something and sell it to my peers,’ he explains.

He was right. After enrolling in – and later dropping out of – Manchester Metropolitan University, in 2014, Bartlett co-founded the social media and marketing company Social Chain. He had offices across the world, and by the age of 23, Bartlett was a millionaire. But, six years of long hours and nights at the office later, Bartlett realised he wasn’t happy and made the decision to step down as director.

‘I’d been driven by trying to become something or someone, or get to a point of financial freedom,’ he explains. ‘And when I achieved that, I bought lots of nice, shiny things – I had a Range Rover Sport for a while. But I’ve pretty much given everything up now. I don’t care about owning things.’

His attitude to love, he says, also shifted. Bartlett met his partner, influencer Melanie Vaz Lopez, in 2016, but they split after a year because he found it tough to juggle the relationship with his career. In 2022, realising he’d made a mistake, he flew to Bali, where she was living, to win her back. He’s since described their relationship as his ‘greatest achievement’.

‘I used to be quite pessimistic about marriage and even platonic relationships were low on my list of priorities,’ he admits. ‘But I felt the cost of that. I remember feeling really lonely when I was 23 or 24, building my business. Achieving any kind of material success without someone to share your life with isn’t the essence of what it is to be human. I’ve learned that I need to invest in myself and in my relationships.’ When I ask how he envisages his future with Melanie, his reply is instant: ‘I want to get married and have lots of kids.’

These days, Bartlett juggles running two businesses – web dashboard design company Thirdweb and brand consultancy firm Flight Story – with his podcast and his role as the youngest Dragon on BBC One’s *Dragons’ Den*, which he landed in 2021. ‘It’s like stepping into the TV, still surreal to this day,’ he says of the show. ‘I have huge respect for the Dragons. They were my business idols, so to sit next to them is an incredible honour.’

The fame that comes with being on TV, however, doesn’t sit quite so comfortably. ‘I’m a bit of an introvert,’ Bartlett says. ‘I don’t really like large public gatherings and I rarely go to events. I do actually think I’m quite boring!’ He describes his home life as ‘remarkably simple’. He goes to the gym, practises DJing and loves to learn. ‘I spend hours reading about everything from rockets to artificial intelligence to evolving social media platforms.’

For now, Bartlett has plenty more projects on the horizon – *The Diary Of A CEO Live* show, a new book and the launch of his Conversation Cards, featuring questions and answers from his podcast designed to encourage people to have more meaningful conversations. His ultimate aim, however, is to maintain balance. ‘Life is based on having a good relationship with my partner, a good relationship with my dog and a good relationship with my ambition. I’m in harmony now.’

The Diary Of A CEO (youtube.com/thediaryofaceo) is available on all major podcast providers. The Conversation Cards will be available at thediary.com

MONEY TALKS

There's a podcast for everything these days, including your finances. Molly Greeves rounds up five of the best

We all have money matters that we've mentally priority-flagged and not yet found the time to deal with. Now, thanks to the advent of financial podcasts, accessing advice and information about money has never been easier – or presented to us in a more engaging (and suitably bite-size) format. Whether you're self-employed, looking to build your savings or just want to make sense of the economy, you can find podcasts aimed at helping you manage your money and understand finance better – and listen while doing anything from your workout to your commute. Here are a few of our favourites...

THE WALLET
WITH EMILIE BELLET

Think that learning about your finances can't be joyful? Wrong! *The Wallet* is both infectiously positive and informative, which is exactly what we'd expect from Emilie Bellet, founder of the digital platform Vestpod and author of *You're Not Broke, You're Pre-Rich*. Geared towards helping women achieve financial independence, Bellet interviews female entrepreneurs and money experts to tackle the money and career issues that may be holding us back.

Start with this episode: *How To Achieve Financial Freedom*. Bellet interviews Mary and Ken Okoroafor, founders of The Humble Penny. Before starting a platform that helps people 'bring financial joy into their lives', the pair fought an uphill battle to be mortgage-free and financially stable, and share their wisdom.

Bellet's advice: 'Building long-term wealth is not a linear journey. We need to be prepared to face setbacks and make mistakes along the way. The key is consistency and building smaller, healthier habits, being open to learning and getting support. Investing for the long term is not always easy, but it is incredibly powerful.'

IT'S not ABOUT THE MONEY
WITH CATHERINE MORGAN

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE MONEY
WITH CATHERINE MORGAN

When it comes to money podcasts for women, *It's Not About The Money* is a must-listen. Formerly called *In Her Financial Shoes*, this podcast aims to help women learn practical money management and build financial resilience. Hosted by qualified financial planner and money coach Catherine Morgan, many of the episodes focus on how shifting your money mindset can help you make better financial decisions.

Start with this episode: *6 Psychology-Based Tricks For Saving More Money.* Our emotions and beliefs about money have a huge impact on the way we save, spend and invest, so in this episode, Morgan offers some thought exercises to help you question and overcome deeply ingrained habits.

Morgan's advice: 'Reframe the way you look at budgeting. Rather than focusing on setting limits, which can feel restrictive, try thinking of it as a spending plan. Allocate every pound to a purpose, like food or travel, and create digital money pots with your bank. It will help you to feel more empowered in making better financial decisions and feel less restrictive at times when money feels tight.'

Money Clinic
with Claer Barrett

MONEY CLINIC WITH CLAER BARRETT

If you want to learn more about money, who better to turn to than Claer Barrett, the award-winning consumer editor of the *Financial Times* and author of *What They Don't Teach You About Money*? Calling on financial experts and other *FT* writers, *Money Clinic* addresses commonly asked finance questions, such as what to do about your mortgage when rates are rising, and gives you 'news you can use' in entertaining 20-minute chunks.

Start with this episode: *What Higher Interest Rates Mean For Your Money.* This episode highlights what Barrett does best, taking a topic we hear about all the time, explaining what is going on in an easy to understand way and giving practical advice so that we can do what's best for our money.

Barrett's top tip: 'There's no such thing as being "good" or "bad" with money! Some people think they're pre-destined to be hopeless with money, but we all have the ability to change our money mindsets and learn more, and today there are so many digital tools to make it easier and more intuitive,' she says.

'Digital banking apps such as Starling and Monzo make it so much easier to budget and create separately named savings "accounts within accounts" to help you hit different goals – plus, you can "round up" your digital spare change. Apps such as Emma, Money Dashboard and Snoop are powered by Open Banking, meaning you can digitally link all of your accounts together for a more complete picture of your finances – and be nudged into ways of saving or getting a better deal.'

A PODCAST
"Black" "Girl" "Finance"

BLACK GIRL FINANCE WITH SELINA FLAVIUS

Black Girl Finance is a coaching platform and community of 'unapologetic, ambitious, money-minded women'. Founder Selina Flavius's book of the same name is a non-preachy guide to kick-starting your finances and this podcast approaches discussions about money in the same light-hearted, conversational tone. Flavius shares her expertise on topics such as money in relationships, 'buy now, pay later' schemes and investing, all in easily digestible episodes.

Start with this episode: *Investing In Stocks And Shares, Risk Appetite, Assets In The Community.* Study after study shows that women make great investors, yet many of us lack the confidence to take the plunge. Flavius breaks down the process of investing in simple terms to encourage women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds to get started.

Flavius's top tip: 'Prioritise your financial wellbeing and make it part of your self-care routine. You can do this by setting aside time to review your spending at least once a month and creating a budget. Think about this as directing your money to the areas of your life that are important to you. Apps such as Plum, Money Dashboard and Emma can help.'

SWITCH YOUR MONEY ON PODCAST
HL

SWITCH YOUR MONEY ON WITH SUSANNAH STREETER AND SARAH COLES

Ever finish watching the news more confused than when you turned it on? In *Switch Your Money On*, Susannah Streeter and Sarah Coles from investment company Hargreaves Lansdown set out to demystify the economy and how it will affect your finances. The podcast is as funny as it's useful.

Start with this episode: *Financial Resilience In 2023.* How has the last year impacted our ability to invest, control debt and plan for the unexpected? Streeter and Coles set out to answer, explaining results from the Hargreaves Lansdown Savings & Resilience Barometer.

Coles's top tip: 'Don't wait for the perfect moment when you have enough money to get on top of everything – it's not coming! Take the first small step today by paying off debts, boosting your pension or making your first investment, and build on it whenever you can. The art isn't about finding one perfect moment; it's finding a million manageable moments along the way.'

Streeter's top tip: 'Patience can bring significant rewards. Investing always brings some risk, but so does leaving money in a savings account paying minimal interest. Resist the urge to switch your investments around and focus on your long-term goals.'

FINANCIALLY Fabulous For money-saving tips, news and brilliant advice, sign up to our fortnightly newsletter at **redonline.co.uk/ffnewsletter**

PHOTOGRAPHY: STOCKSY

Cotton
TRADERS
Pip's
Lemon Shirt
£38

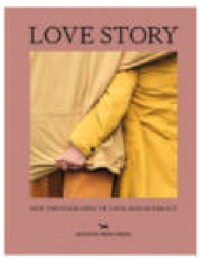
#PatternPark
The style of your life cottontraders.com

READS

Edited by *Ella Dove*

From the **HEART**

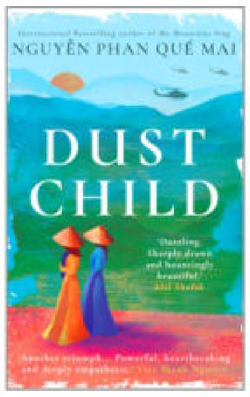
HOW DO YOU CAPTURE LOVE? THROUGH INTIMATE PORTRAITS OF PARTNERS, FRIENDS, FAMILY AND COMMUNITIES, PHOTOGRAPHERS SEEK TO PAINT A PICTURE OF IT IN ALL ITS FORMS, FROM THE POIGNANT TENDERNESS OF NEW LOVE (PICTURED) TO THE VULNERABILITY OF LOST LOVE, IN THIS CHARMING COFFEE TABLE BOOK.



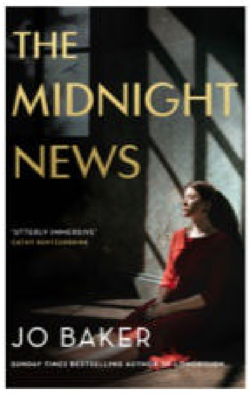
Love Story (Hoxton Mini Press) by Rachel Segal Hamilton is out now

The month's
BEST BOOKS

LITERARY EDITOR **Sarra Manning** PICKS HER FAVOURITE READS…

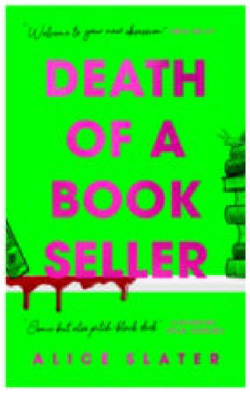


Dust Child by Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai *(Oneworld, £16.99, out 20th April)*
In 1969, sisters Trang and Quỳnh become bar girls in Saigon to pay off family debts. In the present day, Phong, a mixed race 'dust child', is abandoned by his Black American GI father and Vietnamese mother, and PTSD-stricken veteran Dan returns to Vietnam. Their stories converge in this gorgeously lyrical novel, which examines what we leave behind in order to move forward.

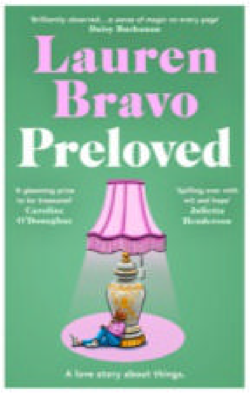


The Midnight News by Jo Baker *(Phoenix, £16.99, out 20th April)*
In London during the Blitz, Charlotte Richmond – recently recovered from a mental health crisis – lives in a boarding house in Crystal Palace and has a dull job at the Ministry Of Information. When her loved ones begin to die, Charlotte becomes convinced it's not bombs that have killed them but the sinister shadowy figure she's sure is stalking her. Clever and utterly compelling.

Love & Other Scams by PJ Ellis *(HarperNorth, £14.99, out 13th April)*
When Cat gets made redundant, she falls back on her side hustle of lifting a few wallets to keep her in funds. Meanwhile, her frenemy Louisa gets engaged to an obscenely wealthy man. Darkly funny but with real tenderness – I devoured this delicious debut romcom in one sitting.



Death Of A Bookseller by Alice Slater *(Hodder & Stoughton, £14.99, out 27th April)*
Roach and Laura work in a North London bookshop, but there the similarity ends. Roach relishes being an oddball as much as she loves reading about serial killers, while Laura is a beautiful, ethereal poet with a past. When Roach's fascination with Laura turns into obsession, it unleashes something dark in both women in this wonderfully creepy and menacing thriller.



Preloved by Lauren Bravo *(Simon & Schuster, £14.99, out 27th April)*
It's hard to believe this wryly observed and exquisitely written story is a debut. Its heroine, Gwen, volunteers in a charity shop after being made redundant, but is as lost as the unwanted donations she prices up. What follows is a journey to find herself that will resonate with lots of women. An absolute gem of a novel, like finding vintage Dior in your local charity shop.

My life in BOOKS

AS HER THIRD NOVEL, *A HOUSE FOR ALICE*, IS PUBLISHED THIS MONTH, *ORDINARY PEOPLE* AUTHOR **Diana Evans** SHARES THE BOOKS THAT HAVE MEANT THE MOST TO HER

My favourite book as a child was…
Alice's Adventures In Wonderland, because it was strange and so matter-of-fact about its fantasy. Whenever I couldn't get to sleep at night, I would imagine myself falling down a hole in the ground, which was actually quite scary, now I think about it!

The one book I think everyone should read is…
A trilogy. In fact, Chinua Achebe's The African Trilogy, comprising *Things Fall Apart*, *No Longer At Ease* and *Arrow Of God*. There is so much beauty and wisdom and reckoning in his writing.

The character I most relate to is…
Shirley from Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*, a history teacher at a secondary school in Peckham. I related to her exactingness and stern moral sense.

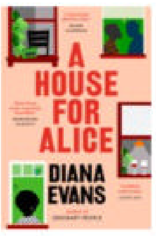
My favourite line from a book is…
I like that bit in *Anna Karenina* when a flustered Vronsky cries, 'No, this is becoming unbearable!' It's so alive, it's funny.

The book that got me through a difficult time is…
Isabel Allende's memoir *Paula*, about the tragic loss of her daughter. It helped me cope through a painful family bereavement during my 20s, and I still remember its clarity and honesty.

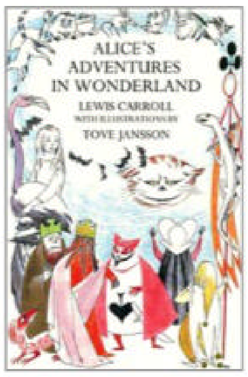
The last book that made me cry was…
James Baldwin's *Going To Meet The Man*. It's a book of short stories and the title story depicts the lynching of a Black man in the American South through the eyes of an eight-year-old boy. I think of it whenever I hear of another Black person being murdered by racism.

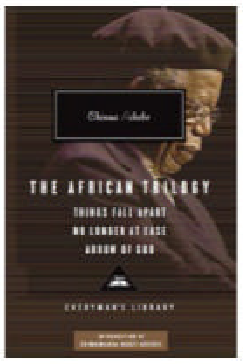
My favourite character from a book is…
It's quite well documented that I'm a fan of Desdemona Stephanides in Jeffrey Eugenides's *Middlesex*. She is truly unforgettable.

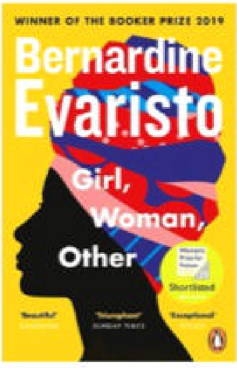
My all-time favourite book is…
I couldn't possibly pick just one, but Jackie Kay's debut novel, *Trumpet*, was awe-inspiring in the way it wove music into its sentences and exploded the notion of a fixed identity – it's a very freeing book. Other absolute favourites are Colum McCann's *Dancer* and Arundhati Roy's *The God Of Small Things*.

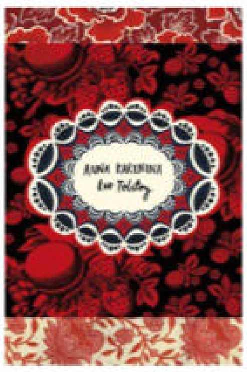

A HOUSE FOR ALICE
DIANA EVANS

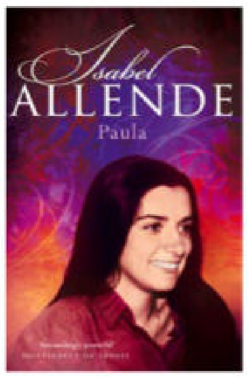
A House For Alice (Chatto & Windus) by Diana Evans is out 6th April

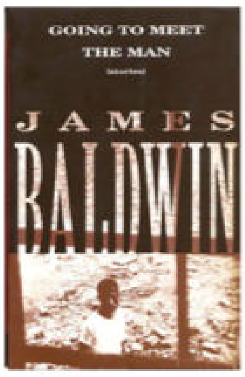

ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND
LEWIS CARROLL
TOVE JANSSON


Chinua Achebe
THE AFRICAN TRILOGY
THINGS FALL APART
NO LONGER AT EASE
ARROW OF GOD
EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY

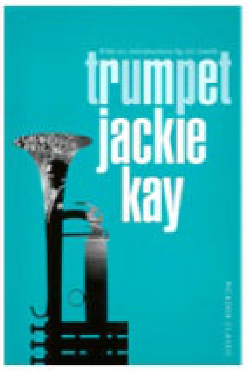

WINNER OF THE BOOKER PRIZE 2019
Bernardine Evaristo
Girl, Woman, Other

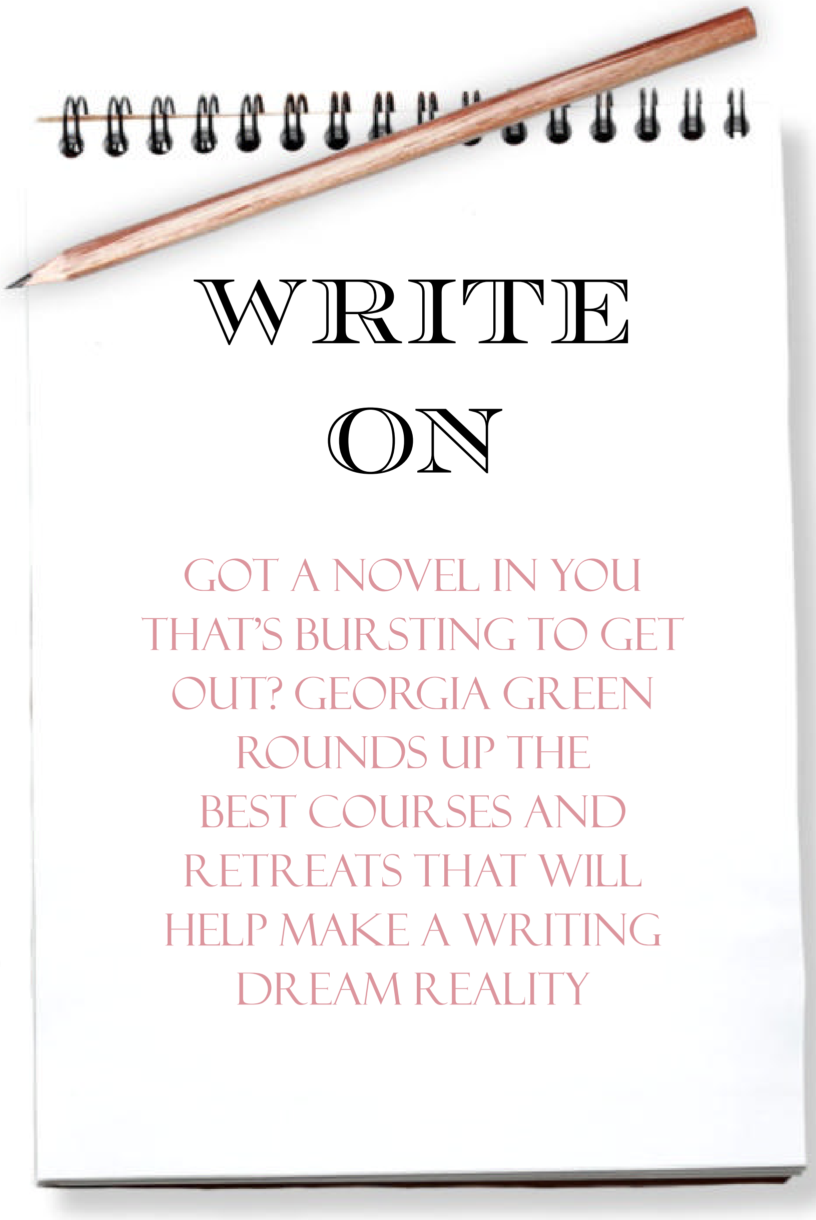

Anna Karenina
Leo Tolstoy


Isabel ALLENDE
Paula


GOING TO MEET THE MAN
JAMES BALDWIN

MIDDLE-SEX
JEFFREY EUGENIDES


trumpet
jackie kay



WRITE ON

GOT A NOVEL IN YOU THAT'S BURSTING TO GET OUT? GEORGIA GREEN ROUNDS UP THE BEST COURSES AND RETREATS THAT WILL HELP MAKE A WRITING DREAM REALITY

BEST FOR... BEGINNERS

Formatted into 12 hours of self-guided study, The Open University's free introductory online course 'Start writing fiction' is a great starting point for building the foundation blocks of fiction writing, taking you through tips for character, setting and genre.

The teaching is taken from the award-winning short story writer Josip Novakovich's seminal 1995 book *Fiction Writer's Workshop* and, while the delivery of the course doesn't offer one-to-one teaching or group discussions, the regular exercises provide brilliant creative writing prompts, encouraging you to broaden your imagination, strengthen your fiction-writing muscle and discover your writing 'voice'.

By the end of the course, you'll possess the fundamental toolkit for writing fiction and a newfound confidence to take you to the next level, whether that's a longer writing course or cracking on with that bestseller.

Free, open.edu

BEST FOR... SCRIPTWRITING

City Academy's 'Script Writing for Beginners' is a six-week evening course held at the famed Sadler's Wells theatre in London.

Perfect for novices and those looking to hone their scriptwriting skills, each 2½-hour in-person session offers the opportunity to work on ideas for film, TV or the stage, as well as share and discuss your script ideas through fun group workshops.

It's taught by Rebecca Reid, an award-winning journalist and author turned screenwriter. Her latest novel, *The Will*, is currently being adapted for TV by a US production company (alongside two other TV comedies in the works).

By the end of the course, Reid promises you'll understand various plot and narrative structures, be able to write engaging and entertaining dialogue between well-realised characters, and have found your screenwriting voice.

£350, 11th July-15th August, city-academy.com

BEST FOR... NON-FICTION

Fancy spending a few days holed up with a *New York Times* bestselling author in a 17th century Jacobean manor beneath Dartmoor's wild tors? Us, too!

Creative non-fiction writer Kathryn Aalto is a master teacher specialising in nature, travel and life writing. With three books to her name, she also holds annual writing retreats in luxuriously wild locations.

Her latest, 'Retreat Into The English Countryside', takes place at Lewtrenchard Manor, a charmingly grand country house hotel nestled in a secluded Devon valley. During the three-day stay, you'll work through lectures, group discussions and practical workshops, building your skills for personal essay writing.

As part of the package, you'll also receive accommodation and dining at the hotel's restaurant (breakfast, lunch and three-course dinners, canapés and cocktails in the evening) plus a one-to-one post-retreat mentoring session with Aalto upon your return.

From £595, 14th-16th August, kathrynaalto.com

BEST FOR... POETRY

Where better to learn the art of poetry than in the beautifully remote Yorkshire Dales? The Garsdale Retreat in Cumbria runs year-round writing retreats, with its popular five-day poetry writing course regularly welcoming new and experienced poets.

Taught by Paul Henry, an award-winning lyric poet and songwriter with eight collections of poetry, each day consists of tutored workshops that enable you to write from memory as well as close observation, plus the chance to share your work with the rest of the group.

There's also plenty of free time to walk the Dales, and in the evenings, you'll enjoy dinner and poetry readings (guest poets including Carole Bromley, winner of the Bridport Award).

Prices include day and evening tutored workshop sessions, readings, accommodation and full-board.

From £845, 17th-22nd July, thegarsdaleretreat.co.uk

'I NEVER IMAGINED *YOU* WOULD BE SO SUCCESSFUL'

A RELATIVELY UNKNOWN AUTHOR UNTIL HER THRILLER *YOU* WAS ADAPTED INTO A HIT SERIES BY NETFLIX, **Caroline Kepnes** TALKS TO BELLA EVENNETT-WATTS ABOUT HER LATEST INSTALMENT, *FOR YOU AND ONLY YOU*

How did the idea for the *You* novels come about?

I had just gone through a very bad time in my life – I'd lost my father, my mum was sick and I also couldn't speak because I had vocal cord nodules [benign growths that can affect speech]. I was living through notepads and writing, playing with different voices, when my protagonist, Joe Goldberg, was born.

Joe is a classic 'bad boy' who commits horrendous crimes – and yet he's also bookish, witty and romantic in his own way. He's strangely likeable. How did his character develop?

I've heard from readers over the years that they feel close to Joe because they're along for the ride with him. I've always asked myself: why would I like Joe? Why would my friends get along with him? A lot of the time I was giving that point of view and then deliberately challenging it. It's a bit like in *Thelma & Louise*, when you're rooting for the characters to do that thing, but after the movie, you're like, 'Wait a minute, what?' I love creating that kind of moment.

What can readers expect from *For You And Only You*?

I wrote it during the pandemic in 2020, because I kept thinking, 'What would Joe be doing? What would that deprivation of normalcy do to him?' I came to the conclusion he'd have written a book. He'd also have kidnapped someone…

What do you think is the secret to creating such a successful series of books?

With anything I read or write, I like getting that trippy feeling in which I've entered a space where time has passed and I don't know where it went. It feels like opening up another world – so I chase that feeling. I also know that if I'm into it, it's likely that someone else will be, too.

How did the Netflix adaptation of *You* come to fruition?

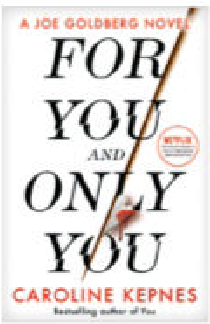
The screenwriter, Greg Berlanti, got an early copy of the first book and loved it. He had such a strong vision for the first series, which led to it being picked up and aired on [US network] Lifetime. I thought it was a beautiful season, but unfortunately the network didn't order another, so Netflix picked it up. That was really exciting – I'll never forget that feeling, knowing that so many people could now watch it.

Does it feel different writing the series now that it's been adapted for TV?

Sometimes it feels like driving an old car, but it's also strange. When I first started thinking about the character, I'd go to the grocery store, see the guy behind the counter and think, 'Oh my God, you're Joe.' Now, it's very bizarre to have actors [such as Penn Badgley] who have become attached to your imagination. It's certainly been fun with my early readers, who've loved Joe since 2014. Now their friends are coming to them, saying: 'Did you watch that show?' and they're like, 'I was screaming about this years ago!'

What's your writing routine when you're at home?

I grew up with the idea of writers being up in the middle of the night, chain-smoking, unable to sleep, with these big ideas and characters in their head, so when I was younger I was a night owl. But lately I've become a morning person. Mostly I'm just grateful that I get to write – I never thought that *You* would be a 10-year-dance that's still going.



For You And Only You (Simon & Schuster UK) by Caroline Kepnes is out 13th April

'CELEBRITY CULTURE HOLDS A MIRROR TO OUR OWN LIVES'

Curtis Sittenfeld TELLS GEORGIA GREEN HOW HER LOVE OF CELEBRITY GOSSIP INSPIRED HER LATEST NOVEL, *ROMANTIC COMEDY*

***Romantic Comedy* centres on the dating life of a comedy sketch show writer. Where did you draw the inspiration?**

My family and I watched a lot of *Saturday Night Live* during the pandemic, and through following the people on the show, I was struck by the fact so many of the male writers and cast members dated the female celebrity guest hosts – like Emma Stone [married to former segment director Dave McCary], Scarlett Johansson [married to head writer Colin Jost] and Ariana Grande [who dated former cast member Pete Davidson]. I found myself wondering, would the phenomenon ever work in reverse, where a talented but essentially ordinary female writer ended up dating or marrying a super-famous celebrity? It seemed unlikely to me, and also like a juicy premise for a novel.

Do you often immerse yourself in celebrity culture?

It tends to be my go-to form of procrastination… In fact, I think I know about the dating lives of celebrities whose movies or TV shows I've never even seen. It's interesting – although celebrity culture might seem far removed from our world, I do think it holds a mirror to our lives.

***Romantic Comedy* is your seventh novel. What unites your books?**

I often find myself using fiction to explore gender double standards, and I seem to have a thing for writing very intelligent women who have strongly held views, often about themselves, that get contradicted by external events. I think that in all my fiction I like to assert something and then kind of blow it up myself, or present the opposite idea. In this age of social media, where we all have these forums for making really provocative declarations, we rarely acknowledge exceptions and I think fiction can be a great place to explore that ambiguity.

One of your many talents is writing brilliantly observed dialogue. Where does your love of language come from?

My dad, who died in March 2021, was very verbally clever and funny, and loved all sorts of wordplay. Rowdy family dinners featuring wide-ranging conversations and lots of jokes have always been a central part of Sittenfeld get-togethers. But, if I'm being honest, I'm also very fond of eavesdropping. A lot of writing is trial and error, so I will also revise dialogue until it sounds natural and effortless.

You once said that you're 'very neurotic for a normal person, but actually very well-adjusted for a writer'. What personality traits do you have that are useful for writing (and not so useful)?

I think my writing self is bolder, more confident and less discouraged by criticism than my regular self. I accept that my books aren't for everyone, so if someone says something bad about one of them, instead of questioning my abilities, I'll think, 'Oh, you're probably not the right reader for this book' – or even, 'Oh, I don't think you get what I'm doing!' However, if someone said to me, 'That's a really terrible pair of trousers you're wearing,' I'd think, 'Oh no, I can't believe I left the house wearing them.'

Do you read your critics?

I definitely read reviews early on, and I read them from writers or publications I respect, but I don't read them all. I'm not a perfectionist in my writing, although I do think it's my responsibility to take something as far as I can. As in: I can know a book has flaws and let it be published, but only if I don't know how to fix the flaws. If I know how to fix a flaw, I believe it's my obligation to do so. But I don't think a perfect novel exists – part of the beauty of humans creating art is that all of it is flawed.

What are you reading at the moment?

Evvie Drake Starts Over by Linda Holmes and, before that, the memoir-ish novel *The Hero Of This Book* by Elizabeth McCracken.

If you could have written any other book, what would it be?

I'm going to say *Trust* by Hernan Diaz – about a staggeringly rich 1920s financier who's actually evocative of Jeff Bezos. It's spectacular and very casually authoritative on a lot of subjects, some of them esoteric. I loved it.

ROMANTIC COMEDY
CURTIS SITTENFELD

Romantic Comedy (Doubleday) by Curtis Sittenfeld is out 6th April

PHOTOGRAPHY: ELLIE SMITH, JOSEPH ANTHONY, DANA HALY/LIONSGATE, JENN ACKERMAN, CHARLIE HOPKINSON, GETTY IMAGES

CULTURE FIX

WITH BOOK ADAPTATIONS HITTING THE SCREEN AND STAGE, PLUS AN IMMERSIVE RETURN TO GREEK MYTHS, THIS MONTH IS ALL ABOUT RETELLING STORIES, SAYS BRYONY GOOCH

From left: ***Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret***; the ***Return Of The Gods*** exhibition; ***The Last Thing He Told Me***; the cast of ***A Little Life***

FILM

Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret

Judy Blume's coming-of-age novel is brought to life in this long-awaited adaptation. Newcomer Abby Ryder Fortson takes us back to the growing pains of puberty as Margaret, the daughter of a Christian mother (Rachel McAdams) and Jewish father (Benny Safdie), who is grappling with her religious identity. In cinemas from 19th May

EXHIBITION

Return Of The Gods

Enter the world of ancient Greeks and Romans as Liverpool's World Museum displays an outstanding collection of classical sculptures, from the king of the gods, Zeus, to his son Hercules and the mighty Athena. The collection is as impressive to behold as the Roman statues found in the Vatican. Opens 28th April; liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

STREAM

The Last Thing He Told Me

Jennifer Garner stars in this mysterious thriller about a woman who develops an unexpected relationship with her stepdaughter after the mysterious disappearance of her husband (*Game Of Thrones*' Nikolaj Coster-Waldau). Based on Laura Dave's *New York Times* bestselling novel, its executive producer is Reese Witherspoon. On Apple TV+ from 14th April

PLAY

A Little Life

The struggle to adapt Hanya Yanagihara's *A Little Life* has been well-documented, but finally it's coming to London's West End with a star-studded cast, including *Happy Valley*'s James Norton, *It's A Sin*'s Omari Douglas and *Bridgerton*'s Luke Thompson – a dream team in its own right. At the Harold Pinter Theatre, London, from 25th March

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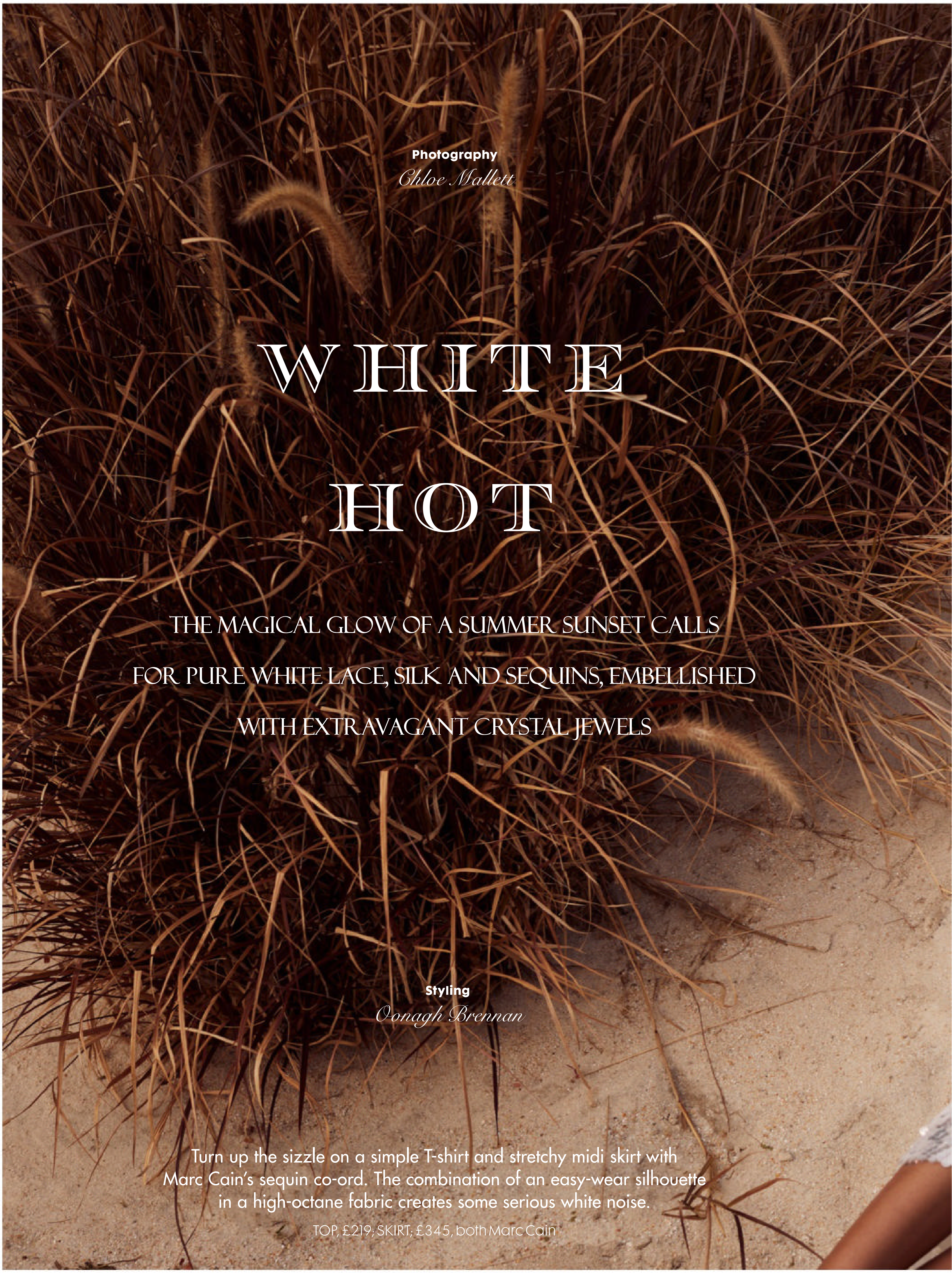
Edited by
Oonagh Brennan

Easy ELEGANCE

AT COCKTAIL HOUR, REACH FOR COOL WHITE COTTON, SNOWY SILKS AND ANGELIC SHEER CHIFFONS. IT'S PURE PERFECTION.

GILET, £590; DRESS, £590; BELT, £420, all Emporio Armani

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHLOE MALLETT



Photography
Chloe Mallett

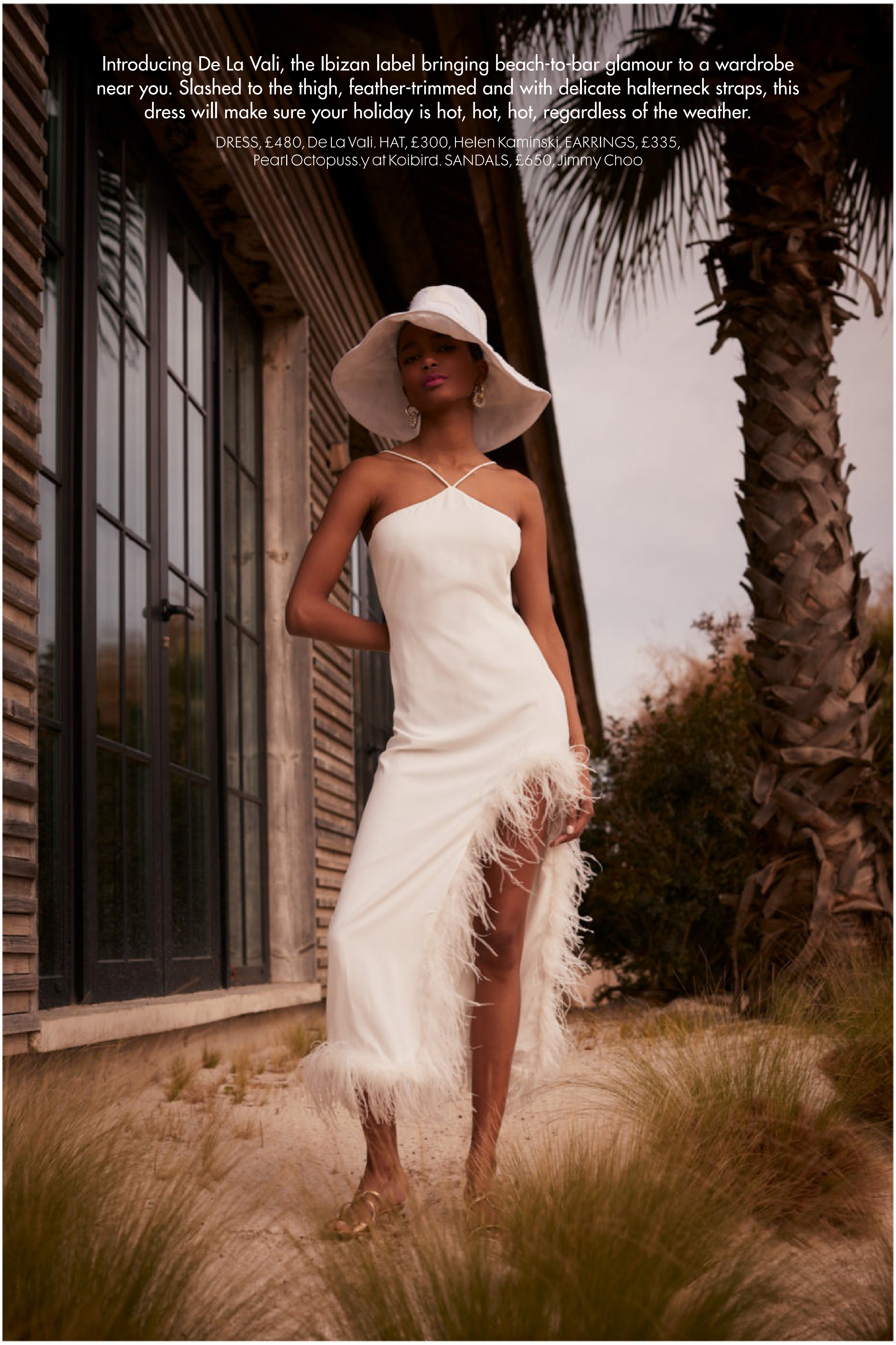
WHITE HOT

THE MAGICAL GLOW OF A SUMMER SUNSET CALLS FOR PURE WHITE LACE, SILK AND SEQUINS, EMBELLISHED WITH EXTRAVAGANT CRYSTAL JEWELS

Styling
Oonagh Brennan

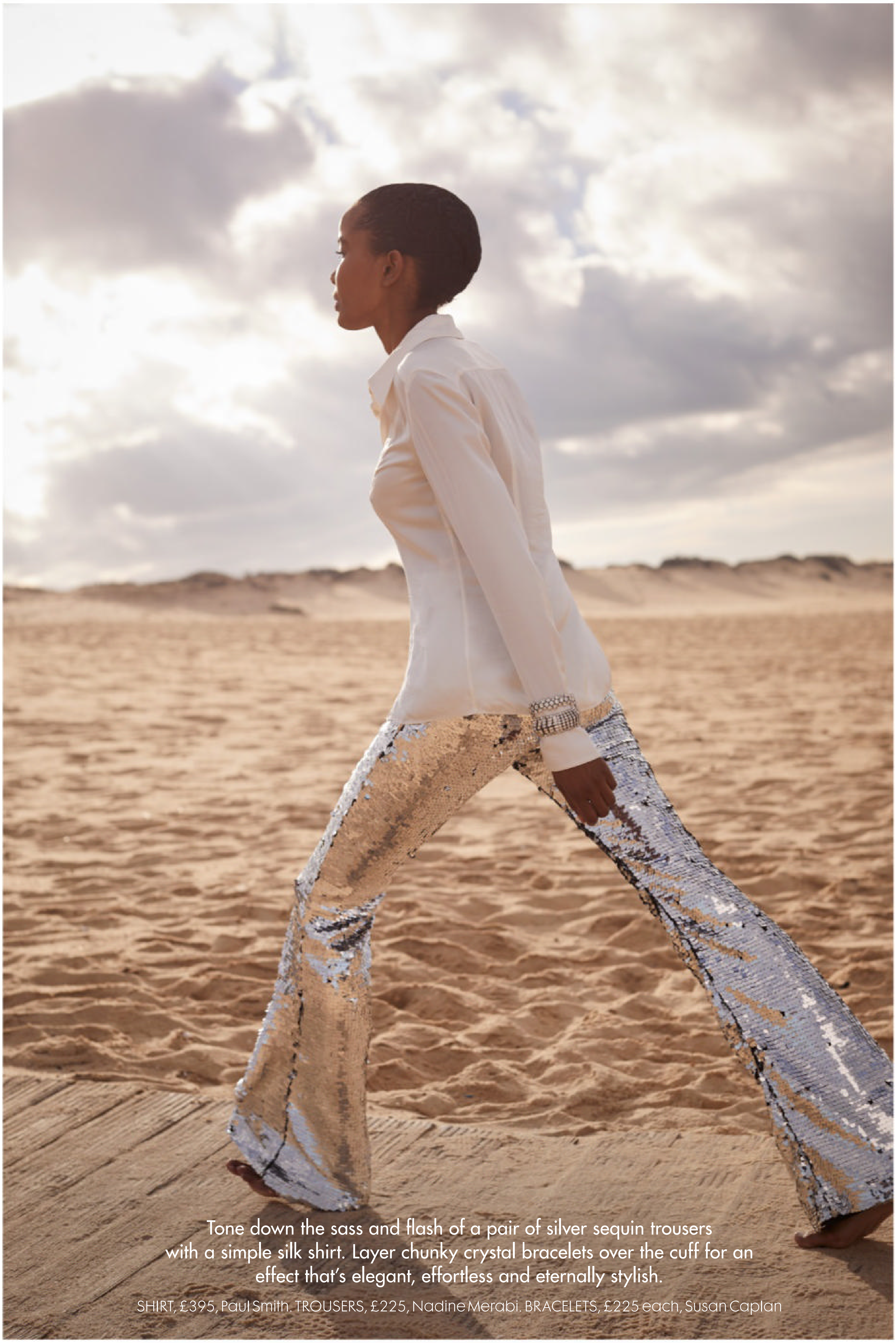
Turn up the sizzle on a simple T-shirt and stretchy midi skirt with Marc Cain's sequin co-ord. The combination of an easy-wear silhouette in a high-octane fabric creates some serious white noise.

TOP, £219; SKIRT, £345, both Marc Cain



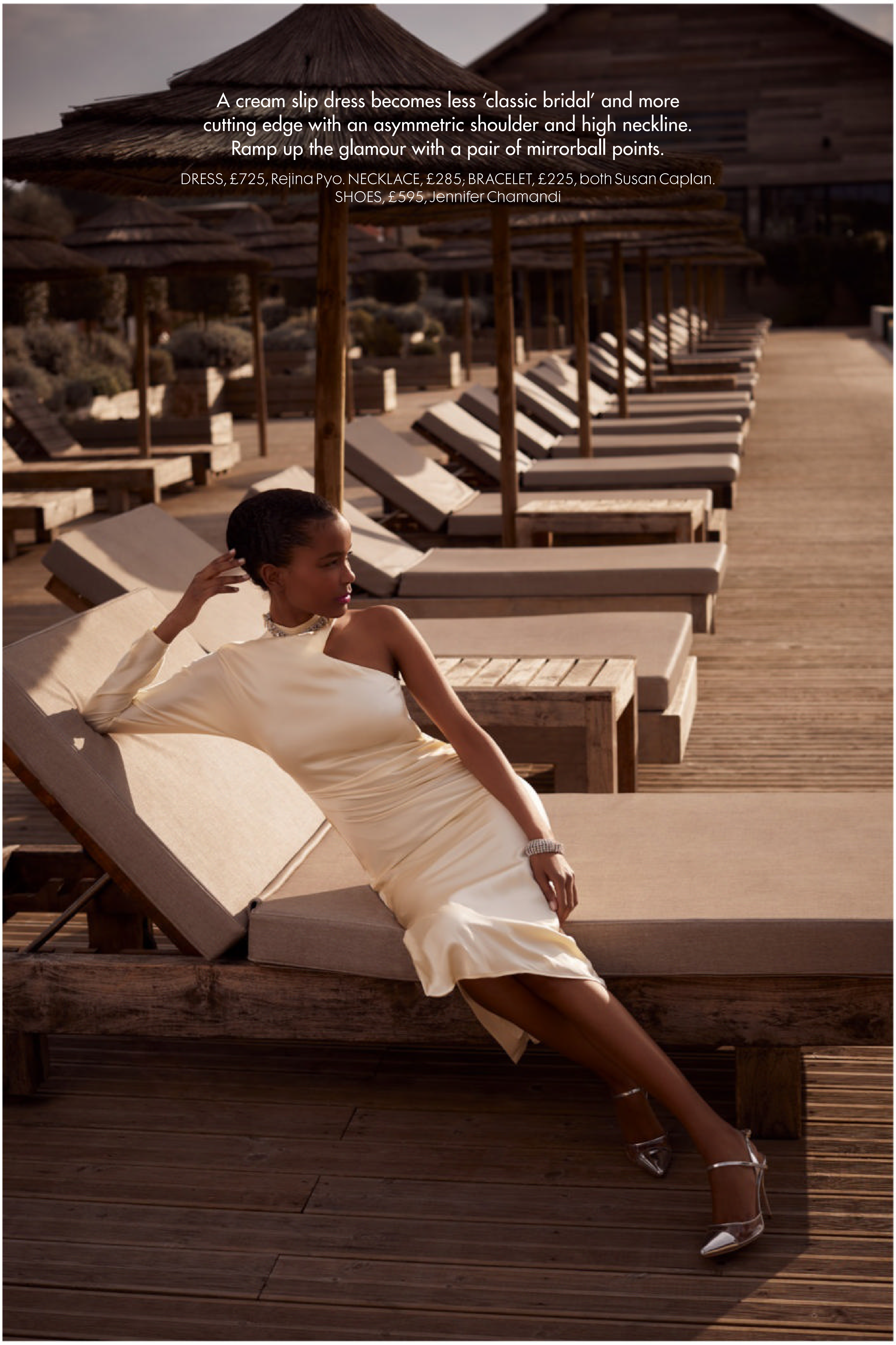
Introducing De La Vali, the Ibizan label bringing beach-to-bar glamour to a wardrobe near you. Slashed to the thigh, feather-trimmed and with delicate halterneck straps, this dress will make sure your holiday is hot, hot, hot, regardless of the weather.

DRESS, £480, De La Vali. HAT, £300, Helen Kaminski. EARRINGS, £335, Pearl Octopuss.y at Koibird. SANDALS, £650, Jimmy Choo



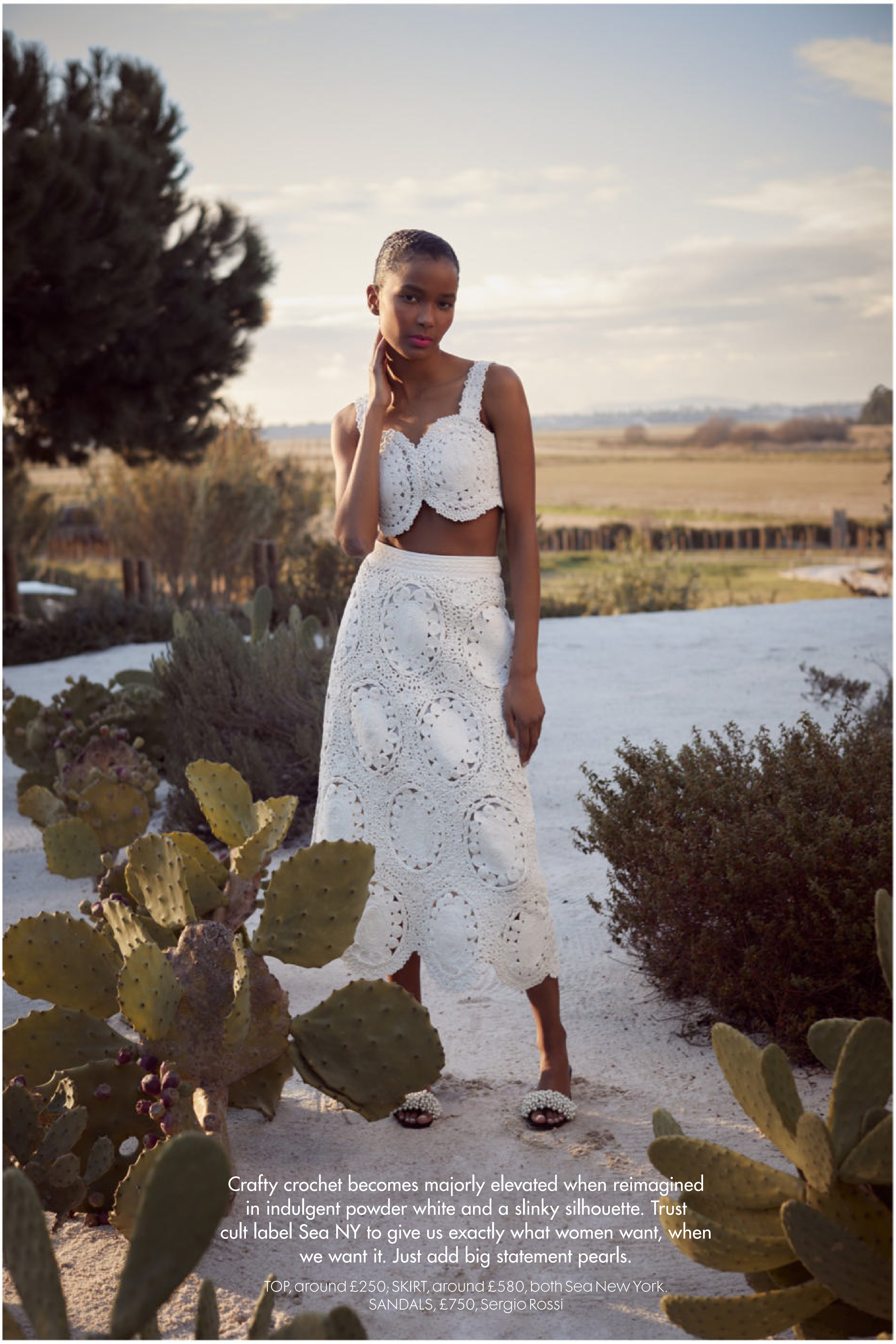
Tone down the sass and flash of a pair of silver sequin trousers with a simple silk shirt. Layer chunky crystal bracelets over the cuff for an effect that's elegant, effortless and eternally stylish.

SHIRT, £395, Paul Smith. TROUSERS, £225, Nadine Merabi. BRACELETS, £225 each, Susan Caplan



A cream slip dress becomes less 'classic bridal' and more cutting edge with an asymmetric shoulder and high neckline. Ramp up the glamour with a pair of mirrorball points.

DRESS, £725, Rejina Pyo. NECKLACE, £285; BRACELET, £225, both Susan Caplan.
SHOES, £595, Jennifer Chamandi

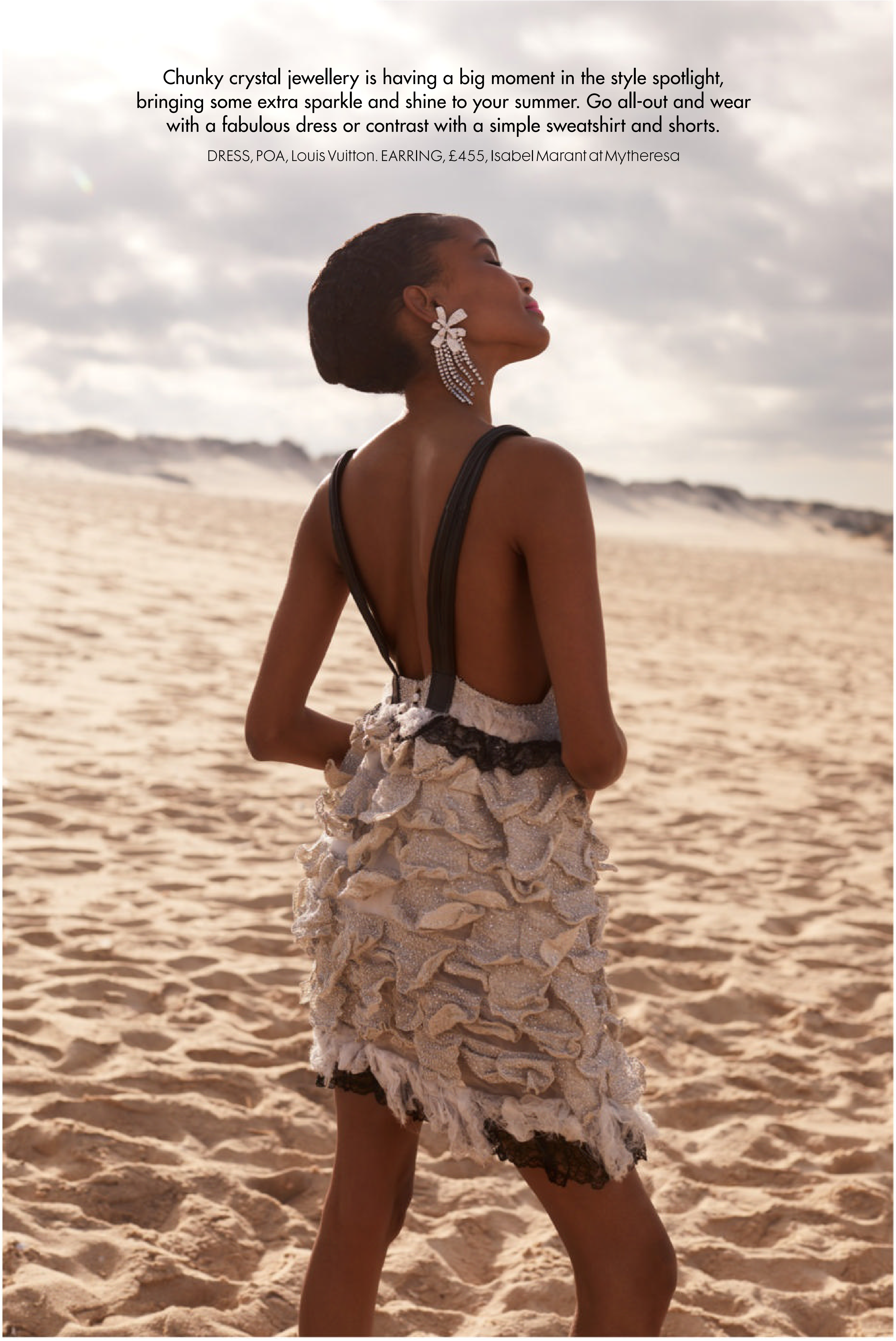


Crafty crochet becomes majorly elevated when reimagined in indulgent powder white and a slinky silhouette. Trust cult label Sea NY to give us exactly what women want, when we want it. Just add big statement pearls.

TOP, around £250; SKIRT, around £580, both Sea New York. SANDALS, £750, Sergio Rossi

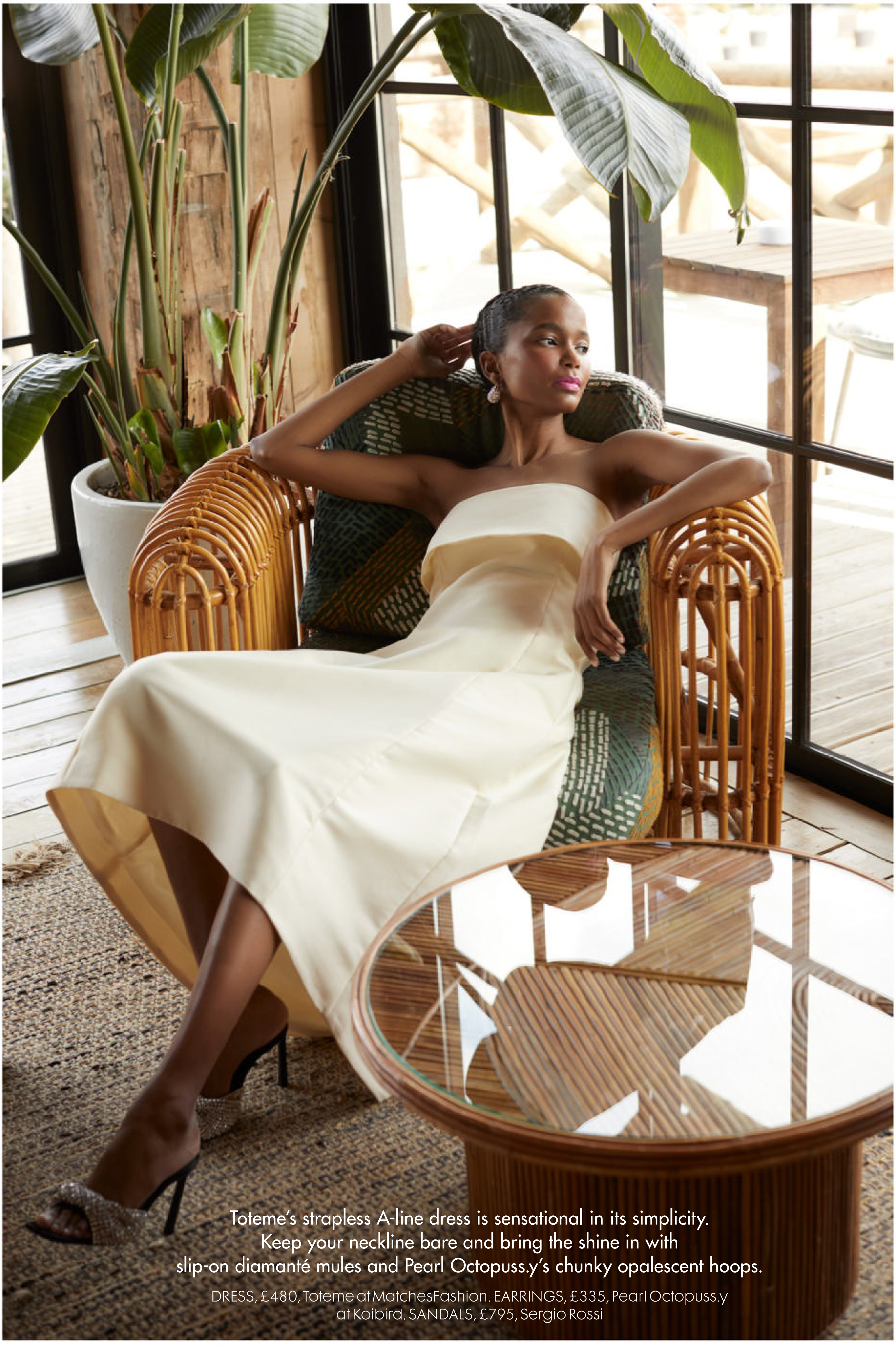
Bahrainian label Noon By Noor's delicate snow-white two-piece is sheer luxury worn over a bustier. Add Loeffler Randall's meringue-peak strappy sandals for a delicious evening ensemble.

MESH TOP, £125; BUSTIER, £275; KILT, £495; all Noon By Noor. EARRINGS, £335, Pearl Octopuss.y at Koibird. SANDALS, £340, Loeffler Randall



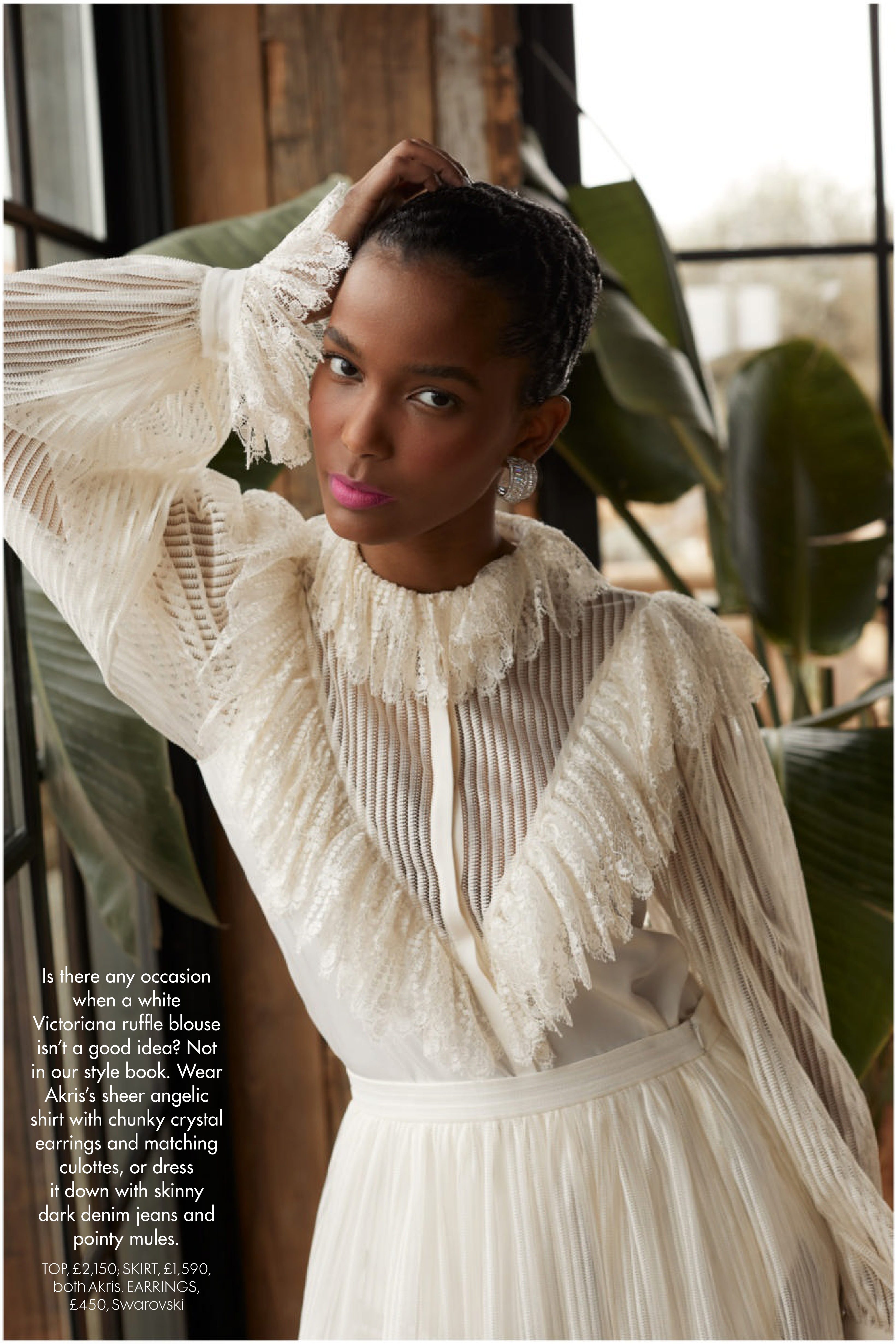
Chunky crystal jewellery is having a big moment in the style spotlight, bringing some extra sparkle and shine to your summer. Go all-out and wear with a fabulous dress or contrast with a simple sweatshirt and shorts.

DRESS, POA, Louis Vuitton. EARRING, £455, Isabel Marant at Mytheresa



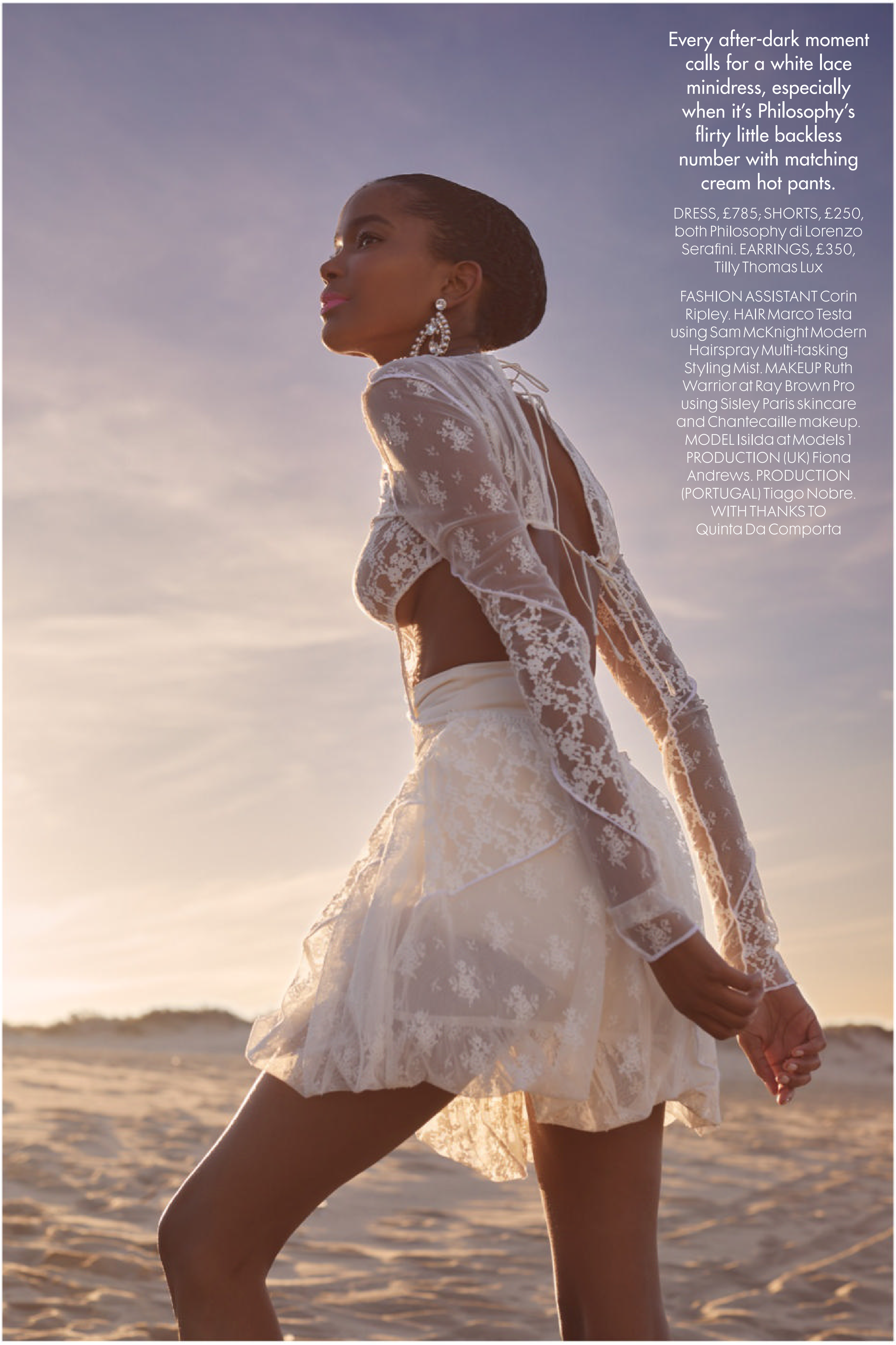
Toteme's strapless A-line dress is sensational in its simplicity. Keep your neckline bare and bring the shine in with slip-on diamanté mules and Pearl Octopuss.y's chunky opalescent hoops.

DRESS, £480, Toteme at MatchesFashion. EARRINGS, £335, Pearl Octopuss.y at Koibird. SANDALS, £795, Sergio Rossi



Is there any occasion when a white Victoriana ruffle blouse isn't a good idea? Not in our style book. Wear Akris's sheer angelic shirt with chunky crystal earrings and matching culottes, or dress it down with skinny dark denim jeans and pointy mules.

TOP, £2,150; SKIRT, £1,590, both Akris. EARRINGS, £450, Swarovski



Every after-dark moment calls for a white lace minidress, especially when it's Philosophy's flirty little backless number with matching cream hot pants.

DRESS, £785; SHORTS, £250, both Philosophy di Lorenzo Serafini. EARRINGS, £350, Tilly Thomas Lux

FASHION ASSISTANT Corin Ripley. HAIR Marco Testa using Sam McKnight Modern Hairspray Multi-tasking Styling Mist. MAKEUP Ruth Warrior at Ray Brown Pro using Sisley Paris skincare and Chantecaille makeup. MODEL Isilda at Models 1 PRODUCTION (UK) Fiona Andrews. PRODUCTION (PORTUGAL) Tiago Nobre. WITH THANKS TO Quinta Da Comporta

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BEAUTY

Edited by
Eve Cameron

diptyque 34 boulevard saint germain paris 5e
L'EAU
PAPIER

Fine ART

Good perfumery is an art, but only Diptyque – the French fragrance brand created by a painter, a set designer and an interiors expert – could turn a blank page into something this beautiful. L'Eau Papier uses white musk, mimosa and roasted sesame seeds to evoke the clean, slightly sweet scent of ink on paper. Skin is the ultimate canvas, though: the fragrance smells subtly different on everyone as the musk notes develop.

DIPTYQUE L'EAU PAPIER EDT, from £90

WORDS: ALEXANDRA FRIEND

A FRESH LOOK

RED'S BEAUTY TEAM ON WHAT TO BUY AND WHAT TO BOOK NOW

BYREDO REMEMBRANCE PALETTE, £77 (AVAILABLE FROM 13TH APRIL)

It's all about formulation innovation and mood-boosting makeup, says beauty director **Eve Cameron**

Spring brings the joy of new makeup. Merit Beauty Shade Slick Tinted Lip Oil is a favourite; a lip oil more pigmented than most that leaves a pretty stain when the shine from the plant oils and shea butter wears off. For dressier colour, there's Shiseido TechnoSatin Gel Lipstick. The angled tip makes for precise application of this densely pigmented yet luminous formula. Elsewhere, I am coveting Byredo's Remembrance palette. Every one of those eyeshadows looks wearable, made for playing with.

As soon as the clocks change, I find myself craving a tan. Self-tan and I don't really hit it off (my last misadventure was with a colourless spray that, over a few hours, developed into a beautiful sun-kissed glow – on my carpet.) The formula that has re-engaged me, however, is St.Tropez Self Tan Luxe Body Serum. It's water-based, spreads easily and uses skincare ingredients such as niacinamide to brighten and reduce redness, along with hydrating hyaluronic acid, which supercharges the tanning process as it reacts with water in the top layer of the skin. Below its upbeat, summery scent lies smart technology that works like Harry Potter's invisibility cloak to shield noses from that ubiquitous biscuity smell. Just like magic. On the face, Votary Hyaluronic Self-Tan Drops feel cosseting, never drying. A couple of drops added to moisturiser and applied twice a week maintains a hint of colour. More is more.

But nothing beats real sunshine for me. On my last sunny holiday I road tested Hada Labo Tokyo Body Sun Lotion SPF50, and can thoroughly recommend it. The brand excels at skincare for dry and dehydrated skin, and this non-sticky hyaluronic formula sinks in fast, leaving skin supple with a lovely sheen. For daily sun protection, Garnier Ambre Solaire Invisible Serum Super UV SPF50+ has a beautiful texture, so weightless you feel you have nothing on your skin.

I'm obsessed with cleansers, especially wash-offs for a clean feel. Modern formulations such as Augustinus Bader's creamy The Foaming Cleanser deliver without leaving skin taut and dry. The same goes for new US import HoliFrog's Tashmoo Water Lily Milky Wash – anti-inflammatory ingredients make it perfect for touchy skin.

The treatment I'm booking is Clarins Precious Luxury Facial Ritual. It's the first new facial in a while from the brand and features Japanese Kobido massage to lift and sculpt, and dissolve tension around the eyes and jawline. Utterly relaxing, it's the sort of treatment that takes you to that blissful space between consciousness and sleep. Products used are from Clarins' new Precious range, which includes a tactile, palm-sized gua sha-meets-acupressure tool you will want to take home. Treatment bookable at John Lewis Clarins Skin Spas, £185 for 90 minutes.

Last word. I have high hopes that Olaplex Lashbond Building Serum will do as much for my short, insignificant lashes as the brand's products have done for the condition of my hair. Results – longer, stronger, fuller lashes – can be seen after four weeks of twice-daily use, says Olaplex.

MERIT BEAUTY SHADE SLICK TINTED LIP OIL IN AU NATUREL, £26

CLARINS PRECIOUS MASSAGE TOOL, £45

VOTARY HYALURONIC SELF-TAN DROPS, £35

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OLAPLEX LASHBOND BUILDING SERUM, £64

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MANTLE THE TREAT CLEARING AZELAIC ACID TREATMENT, £47

Senior beauty editor **Alexandra Friend** *loves colour for kids and shine in the right places*

Matte skin – and not just matte, but flawless, poreless skin – is making a comeback and I'm surprised to find that I like it: dewy skin is gorgeous, but it needs something non-dewy to set it off. Maybelline SuperStay Up To 24H Hybrid Powder-Foundation is marketed to a Gen-Z customer who loves a heavily perfected look, but in small doses that's no bad thing. Instead of piling it on with a sponge as TikTokers do, I dust it over nose, chin and forehead with a fluffy brush. The polished finish lasts longer (and looks more pulled-together) than my usual skin tints, and it's surprisingly comfortable on my dry-ish skin.

On the subject of TikTok, I have started a #BIABjourney, which means growing out weak, damaged nails under the protection of a GelBottle Builder In A Bottle manicure, from £30. My nails are generally healthy, but a slapdash (read: picked-off) gel removal has left them snapping at the tips. BIAB's patented gel is applied more thickly where the nail is structurally weakest, so it acts as armour against daily wear and tear. I get to look at shiny, groomed nails instead of pitted, flaky ones, and the damage won't get any worse as they grow – I just have to not pick it off.

My six- and eight-year-old daughters are too young for TikTok and gel nails, but they love makeup. The line I'm taking is one of joy: colour is fun and anything goes. Zara Mini Artists is created for kids by makeup artist Diane Kendal. The bright pots, chunky crayons, brushes and cat-themed face stencils look like cool art supplies, the quality is great and even the nail polish washes off with water.

Another spring discovery is the By Far fragrance collection. These are not cheap (a refillable starter set is £180; refills cost £110), but they are unusual and gorgeous. My pick – though it's hard to choose – is the playdough-inspired Daydream Of Hopscotch, with marzipan-y almond notes.

For the home, I love the new candle trios from Stories Parfums, inspired by the top, middle and base notes of founder Tonya Kidd-Beggs' dreamy fragrances. Each mini candle is as lovely as the next, with a range of crowd-pleasing notes such as orange blossom, sandalwood, honey, tobacco and jasmine.

In hair news, Living Proof makes the best finishing products. The No Frizz collection is split into different weights for different hair types. The Smooth Styling Cream suits my medium waves, but there's also a spray for fine hair and a serum that's brilliant for blowing out thicker, Afro hair. All minimise frizz and maximise shine.

On shine, Jones Road has a new Miracle Balm. Everyone loves Miracle Balm on *Red*, from the beauty team to the art and pictures desks, and now our editor, Sarah. Miami Beach – a cheering and pretty coral – is perfect for now.

My last pick is for skin. I used Mantle The Treat for one week and was blown away. It uses CBD and azelaic acid to tone down redness almost immediately, then works on blemishes and pigmentation over time. It left my skin looking calm, glowing and even, and I highly recommend it.

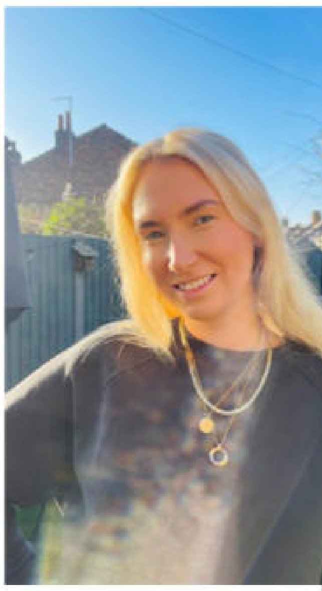
BY FAR DAYDREAM OF HOPSCOTCH SET, £180

JONES ROAD MIRACLE BALM IN MIAMI BEACH, £36

ZARA MINI ARTISTS BRUSHES, £5.99 EACH

LIVING PROOF NO FRIZZ SMOOTH STYLING CREAM, £33

Acting beauty editor **Rosie Fitzmaurice** *is cheered by uplifting scents and a Korean facial*



Scent is closely linked to memory and the fruity, floral vanilla-y-ness of Sol de Janeiro's Bom Dia Bright Clarifying AHA BHA Body Wash takes me back to Ipanema Beach in Rio, where I lived for a year, and where body care is taken seriously. It has exfoliating AHAs from mango and banana, salicylic acid for blemishes and the coral-coloured bottle makes me feel instantly happy.

I am a sucker for anything that smells good. I religiously use Davines OI All In One Milk to soften and detangle my fine, overbleached hair without weighing it down, but I originally discovered it by asking fellow beauty editor Fleur what perfume she was wearing. It has excellent heat protection, too, but it's the scent I'm really obsessed with.

A skincare lesson I've learned is that consistency and routine are the key to getting results from retinoids. In Malin + Goetz Retinol Correcting Serum the retinoid is encapsulated, which means it's released gradually. This makes it gentler on sensitive skin, which encourages me to use it regularly, and it has vitamins C and E for brightness and environmental protection.

Alongside my retinoid, I'll be flooding my skin (which is prone to dryness) with hydration. As with every other beauty product that lands on my desk at the moment, Avène Hyaluron Activ B3 Concentrated Plumping Serum features hyaluronic acid in varying molecular weights (which help it to penetrate deeper) and calming niacinamide, two ingredients that work well together to bring down redness and lock in lasting moisture. Layering this serum under my SPF each morning adds noticeable elasticity to my skin.

Consistency is something I need in my lip care, too. Ole Henriksen Pout Preserve Peptide Lip Treatment leaves mine feeling juicy and soft thanks to peptides, butters and oils, and has a glossy (but not sticky) finish. The dispenser feels more hygienic than digging into a pot, and it smells like chocolate orange.

Everyone's wild for skin tints, but for a tad more coverage, try the Glowy Super Skin Weightless Hydrobounce Serum Foundation from the dewy makeup pros at Saie. You can see your own skin through the luminous finish, but it's just slightly less sheer than the brand's now-viral Slip Tint. It's packed with skincare ingredients, including not just HA but mega-hydrator polyglutamic acid and skin-quenching squalane, too.

JAB (or just add blush) is my mantra for perking up lacklustre skin. Buffing out a dot of Vieve's new liquid Sunset Blush Balm on each cheek says 'healthy'; another layer will give me a sundowners-on-the-terrace feel. Rosa is my shade.

To round things off, something to de-puff. In London's Belgravia, aesthetic doctor David Jack has opened a smart new clinic with a facial bar offering Korean-inspired treatments. My practitioner, Iris, blew me away with her golki technique – a very firm sculpting and lymphatic drainage massage that kneaded out tension-induced knots in my jaw that had been there for years. I couldn't believe how much more defined and lifted my cheekbones appeared once she'd worked her magic (£130 for 45 minutes).

OLE HENRIKSEN POUT PRESERVE PEPTIDE LIP TREATMENT, £17

DAVINES OI ALL IN ONE MILK, £24.50

VIEVE SUNSET BLUSH BALM IN ROSA, £21

AVÈNE HYALURON ACTIV B3 CONCENTRATED PLUMPING SERUM, £40

MALIN + GOETZ RETINOL CORRECTING SERUM, £64

SOL DE JANEIRO BOM DIA BRIGHT CLARIFYING AHA BHA BODY WASH, £23

OLEHENRIKSEN
Pout Preserve
Peptide Lip
Treatment
davines
OI ALL IN ONE MILK
135 ml ℮ 4.56 fl.oz. U.S.
VIEVE
SUNSET BLUSH BALM
LUMINOUS LIQUID BLUSH
EAU THERMALE
Avène
HYALURON ACTIV B3
SÉRUM CONCENTRÉ REPULPANT
CONCENTRATED PLUMPING SERUM
Made in France
MALIN+GOETZ
retinol correcting serum
SOL de Janeiro
BOM DIA BRIGHT
CLARIFYING AHA BHA BODY WASH
3 fl oz / 90 mL ℮

SAIE GLOWY SUPER SKIN WEIGHTLESS HYDROBOUNCE SERUM FOUNDATION, £34

it
YOUR SKIN BUT BETTER
CC+ NUDE GLOW
Color Correcting Medium Coverage Skin Tint + Brightening Glow Serum
SPF/FPS UVB 40
UVA PA+++

IT COSMETICS CC+ NUDE GLOW COLOR CORRECTING SKIN TINT SPF40, £33

MERIT FLUSH BALM CHEEK COLOR IN BEVERLY HILLS, £30

VIT C PLEASE
nourishing cuticle oil
NAILS.INC
LONDON

NAILS.INC VIT C PLEASE NOURISHING CUTICLE OIL, £9

THE RICE WASH
TATCHA

TATCHA THE RICE WASH, £41

Springtime switch-ups mean a lighter base and micro-fine highlights for beauty editor **Fleur Fruzza**

As an obsessive fragrance wardrober (a different scent for every season, mood or shoe change), spring requires optimism in a bottle and I'm yet to find one that beats Clinique Happy. The sparkly opening of every citrus fruit imaginable just gets better as it segues into a flurry of luminous florals. It's currently available in a limited-edition bottle designed by actor Emilia Clarke, with 30% of the proceeds going to her brain injury charity, SameYou.

Also on springtime scents, I love the small pleasure of a gorgeous hand soap. You can instantly gauge the fragrance expertise in Guerlain's honey-enriched Néroli Outrenoir Liquid Hand Soap, a sublimely delicate blossom blend in an equally beautiful glass bottle.

Such a treat is the creamy-yet-exfoliating texture of The Rice Wash by Tatcha that it almost feels like a bonus when this softly foaming cleanser leaves my skin feeling thoroughly clean, gently buffed and juicily hydrated by the hyaluronic acid and algae complex it contains.

For hands down the easiest blush I've ever applied, try Merit Flush Balm Cheek Color, which I wear in the flatters-everyone warm pink shade Beverly Hills. The dome-shaped applicator imparts just the right amount of colour in just the right place – a swift blend with the fingers and done. Another triumph from this cult brand.

This is the time of year when sheer bases come into their own. It Cosmetics CC+ Nude Glow Color Correcting Skin Tint SPF40 is a great lightweight base, a little of which goes a long way. The formula is 90% skincare, including niacinamide and hyaluronic acid, which together give bounce and improve texture. It comes in 22 shades, gives gorgeous glow and is billed as medium coverage, so I find one pump is enough.

Leaving as long as possible between colour appointments is as good for my bank balance as it is for my hair. Twice a year (that's spring and autumn) I get strategic 'baby lights' with one of the colour magicians at the Nicola Clarke at John Frieda salon: super-fine foil highlights that leave plenty of natural hair in-between the colour and suit various hair shades and types. The regrowth is soft, manageable and natural-looking, as if after a sun-soaked holiday (from £145).

Skin barrier-boosting formulas are having a real moment, mainly in response to the overuse of powerful actives. As the owner of a long-term irritable and dry complexion, I'm taking full advantage. My latest excellent find is Murad Exasoothe Daily Defense Cream, which uses colloidal oatmeal to soothe itchiness and a medley of niacinamide and shea butter fatty acids to hydrate and protect.

I also get eczema on my hands, and my cuticles and nails suffer as a result, so I'm very into the recent influx of skincare-centric nail and hand care. Nails.Inc Vit C Please Nourishing Cuticle Oil combines vitamin C with vitamin E and apricot kernel oil to nourish the cuticle and improve overall nail health, while Mii Care + Caress Hand Serum contains three types of hyaluronic acid and almond oil to lavish hands with some proper attention.

NÉROLI OUTRENOIR
GUERLAIN
PARIS

GUERLAIN NÉROLI OUTRENOIR LIQUID HAND SOAP, £70 (REFILL £56)

Mii
CARE + CARESS
HAND SERUM
SÉRUM POUR LES MAINS

MII CARE + CARESS HAND SERUM, FROM £29

EXASOOTHE
Murad.
Daily Defense Cream
Crème de défense quotidienne
for face and eyes
pour le visage et les yeux

MURAD EXASOOTHE DAILY DEFENSE CREAM, £54

clinique happy.
You are enough,
Emilia xx

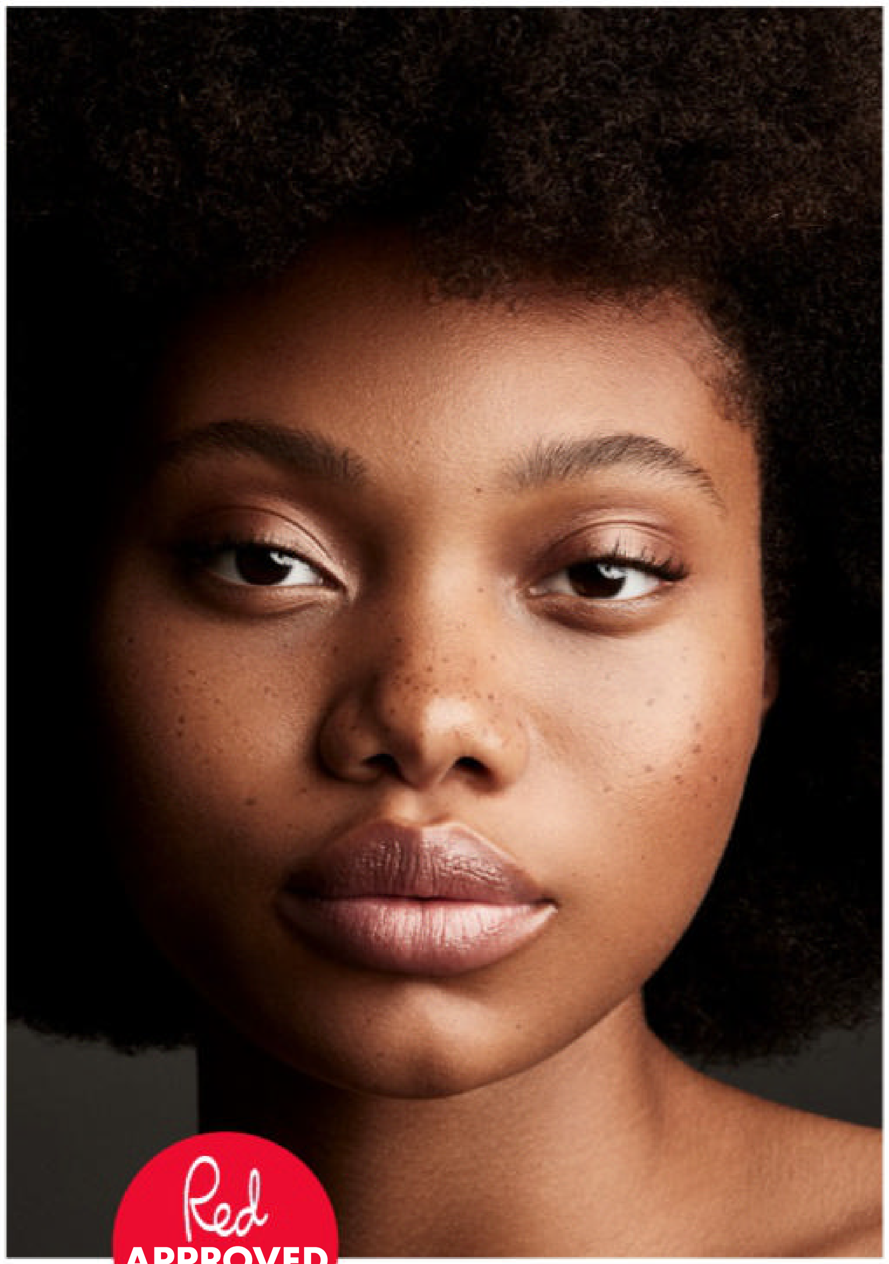
CLINIQUE HAPPY LIMITED EDITION EDP, FROM £50

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEXANDRE WEINBERGER/TRUNK ARCHIVE, DAVID VENNI

The best…

COLLAGEN SUPPLEMENTS

THEY PROMISE FRESHER-LOOKING SKIN AND STRONGER NAILS AND HAIR, BUT DO THESE POWDERS, PILLS AND DRINKS DELIVER?



MARINE COLLAGEN
BEAUTY BLEND
SKIN · NAILS · JOINTS · BONES
200g
KIKI HEALTH

JOINT WINNER

KIKI HEALTH MARINE COLLAGEN BEAUTY BLEND CAPSULES

£35 for 150 capsules 74/100

Most of the panel enjoyed smoother skin after just four weeks, with our lab tests revealing a 'very effective' reduction in fine lines after 12. Flavourless and easy to swallow, they also left hair shinier and nails stronger.

REVIVE COLLAGEN
ENHANCED PLUS

BEST COLLAGEN SACHETS

REVIVE COLLAGEN ENHANCED PLUS HYDROLYSED MARINE COLLAGEN DRINK

£39.99 for 14 sachets 73/100

Testers said skin looked smoother and less dull and tired after drinking these subtly tropical-flavoured supplements. The syrup can be mixed with water and drunk as a daily tonic (think fruit squash).

Red APPROVED 2023

How we tested

Our panel of just under 200 readers tested 13 brands of collagen supplements over three months. They judged each product on its taste, ease of use and performance (how much it improved the condition of skin, hair and nails). Back in the *Red* lab, our experts used a high-tech skin analysis machine to record any changes to testers' skin texture and appearance.

25+
GOLD COLLAGEN
PURE

BEST FOR NAIL STRENGTH

GOLD COLLAGEN PURE LIQUID COLLAGEN **£39 for 10 bottles** 73/100

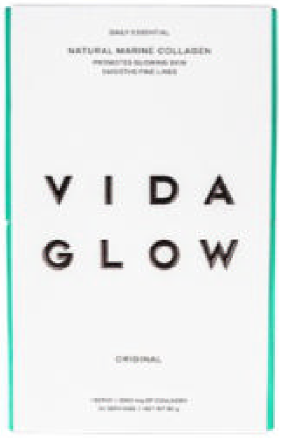
Our panel raved about the health and growth of nails, marvelling that they were stronger post-trial. Great for skin and hair, too, the peach/passion fruit flavour helps it go down (one bottle daily, drunk straight). The glass packaging is easily recyclable.

BEST FOR TRAVEL

VIDA GLOW ORIGINAL NATURAL MARINE COLLAGEN SACHETS

£39 for 30 sachets 71/100

These flavourless sachets are perfect for stirring into your morning coffee, wherever you may be – weighing in at 3g per pouch, they're small and light enough to pop in your purse. Our testers reported brighter, firmer and more hydrated skin after the three-month trial, plus healthier-looking hair and nails.



QMS
MEDICOSMETICS
COLLAGEN INTRAVITAL PLUS

JOINT WINNER

QMS MEDICOSMETICS COLLAGEN INTRAVITAL PLUS CAPSULES **£80 for 60 capsules** 74/100

If healthy hair is why you're here, QMS could take the crown. Most testers said hair felt shinier, stronger, smoother and longer after just four weeks of popping these collagen pills. Nail growth sped up and skin felt firmer, too.

WORDS: FLORENCE REEVES-WHITE. TESTING: ORLA BADGER. PHOTOGRAPHY: YAW ASIEDU/GALLERYSTOCK

Spotlight on... SUSANNE KAUFMANN

THE EPONYMOUS SKINCARE AND WELLBEING BRAND IS A CASE STUDY IN MODERN SUSTAINABILITY

MALLOW BLOSSOM BATH, £50; FIG ROOM SPRAY, £40

BOWL, £48, Cutter Brooks

KJAER WEIS POWDER IN TRANSLUCENT, £44

There's a luxury about Susanne Kaufmann that's not quite how we expect luxury to look: spare black print on clear glass jars, matt white card boxes and a mallow blossom bath foam that is absolutely not a bottle of rosy fluff. But – if you know, you know – this stuff is gold. It's smart, it's sensorial and it's sold in the best beauty halls and online stockists. There are targeted skincare serums with hyaluronic acid and vitamin C, delicious-smelling herbal bath powders, unshowy moisturisers that beauty editors are devoted to, and masks that give skin a fast, supercharged glow. It's a brand that makes you want to sweep everything else off your bathroom shelves and replace with a short edit of bottles, because that's all you need. But to really get it, it helps to know Bezau, the Austrian mountain village that's home to the brand. It's a little like the analogy of the maddly paddling swan. On the surface, it's all wood panelling and traditional Alpine craftsmanship. Underneath, everything is sleek, modern and busily sustainable, from the high-spec underfloor heating to the solar panelling.

'There's a phrase – I can't quite say it in English – we honour the old and we run for the new,' says Kaufmann, who grew up in Bezau and lives there now with her husband and two children. Keeping production local is key to her business model – it minimises carbon footprint, but also keeps the community buoyant. 'When I started almost 20 years ago, a retailer never asked, "What do you do?" you know, for the environment, for sustainability, against modern slavery. Now, you get pages of questions about how and where you produce, what energy you use and where you source your ingredients. But more and more, you get asked how you treat people, and what you give back,' notes Kaufmann, who, along with her musician husband, supports a yearly music festival, Bezau Beatz. 'I grew up here, I live here, and it makes sense to explore what we can do here,' she says. 'In many Alpine regions, the young people leave for the cities when they finish school, and if the young leave, sooner or later a region dies. Here, people stay because there are work opportunities and because the vibe is nice. It's a cyclical thing. When we produce locally, it creates more jobs and brings people to the area, which brings intelligence and innovation, too.'

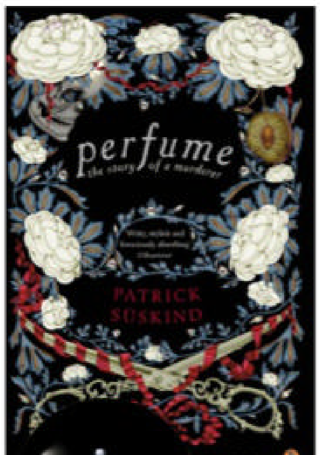
Bezau is also home to the Hotel Post, run by the Kaufmann family for five generations and now the location of the flagship Susanne Kaufmann Spa. It features a programme of traditional Chinese medicine, detox retreats and regionally produced and preserved fruits and vegetables. 'Good food, fresh air… this is how I grew up,' says Kaufmann. 'A very healthy lifestyle is normal here.'

Outside of work, walking still figures large, as does reading and bathing. (Also in her bathroom: Byredo fragrance and refillable makeup from Kjaer Weis.) 'We know that even a 20-minute bath can calm the nervous system, so do it instead of following 10 more people on Instagram, which takes just as long,' she points out. Consider yourself told; now go and run that bath…

'I prefer a natural makeup look. This gives a very subtle, flawless finish'

'A book that explores the sense of smell and its relationship with emotional meaning'

HYDRATING FACE GEL, £60; DEEP CLEANSING OIL, £45



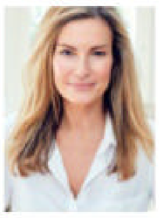
PERFUME (Penguin Essentials) by Patrick Süskind

BYREDO DE LOS SANTOS EDP, £130

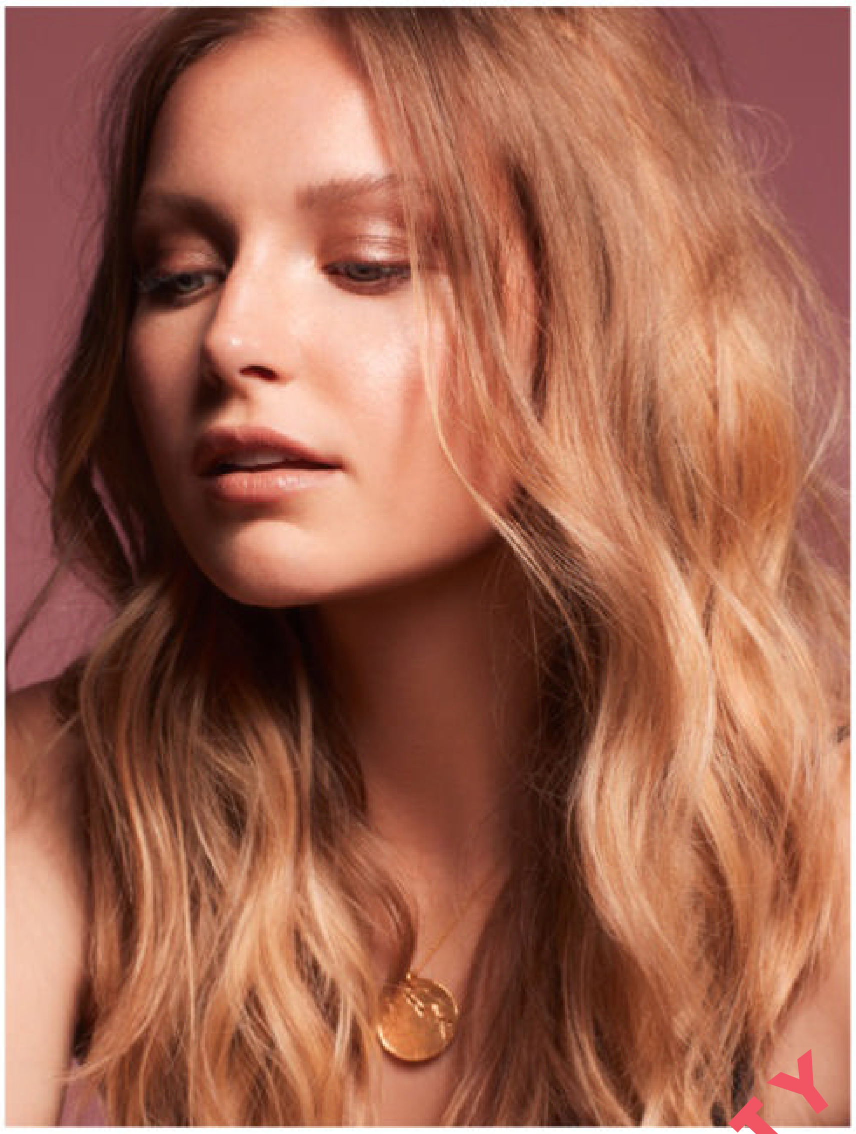
'This was love at first smell. It has aromatic notes of musk, sage, amber and incense'

WORDS: ALEXANDRA FRIEND. PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRISTIAN ANWANDER

THE BEAUTY INFLUENCER



RED'S BEAUTY DIRECTOR EVE CAMERON SHARES A FEW OF HER FAVOURITE THINGS



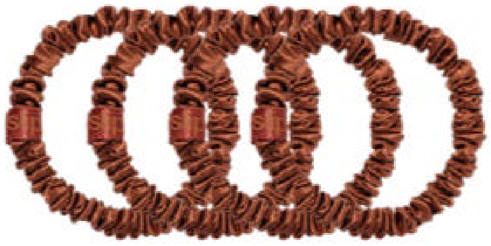
ON A ROLL

For soft, bouncy waves, I'm devoted to heated rollers. What's key, John Frieda senior stylist Joel Goncalves tells me, is not to roll hair from the ends to the root, but to place the roller mid-way along the length of the hair, wrap the ends around it, then roll it towards the scalp and pin it. Fix the rollers randomly – you don't need neat rows – working front to back on the top of the head and downwards at the sides. To avoid a big 1980s 'do, he recommends leaving them in for only a few minutes (six minutes maximum for a stronger curl), but if results do look too done or curly, brushing the hair through and running a hairdryer over it will loosen things up.

BABYLISS THERMO-CERAMIC ROLLERS, £60

These are the ultimate scrunchies: not too tight, nor too loose, and they don't leave kinks. They now come in seven hair-matching colours, including auburn and blonde.

SLIP SKINNY SILK SCRUNCHIES PACK OF 4, £29



GOUTAL CRÈME UNIVERSELLE BODY CREAM, £59

HELLO AGAIN

Some scents are just for a season, others are friends for life – even though you may spend long periods of time apart. Annick Goutal's fragrances fall into the latter category for me, especially Eau d'Hadrien – a timeless ode to a sun-soaked Tuscan landscape of citrus groves and cypress trees. Happily, the ways to experience the scents just expanded with an all-new bath and body line-up, including a body cream designed to amplify fragrance when applied (it's the subtle musk notes in the cream that act as a kind of fixative, which prolongs the scent trail). I think it's time to get back in touch…

GOUTAL PETITE CHÉRIE BODY MILK, £48

GOUTAL EAU D'HADRIEN SHOWER OIL, £37

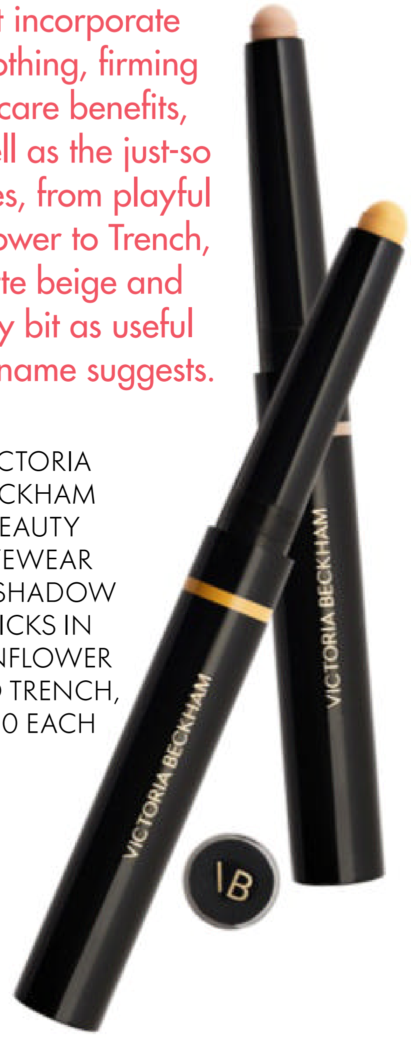
LA BOUCHE ROUGE MANIFEST SET, £25

MAKING SCENTS

So committed is La Bouche Rouge to sustainability that the new five-strong, colour-inspired fragrances in its Discovery Set are housed in generously sized recyclable aluminium tubes. Each of the exquisite scents – from the dreamy, luminous Rose to the soft, powdery, skin-like Nude – contain 30% upcycled ingredients, too.

EYE-CONIC

Victoria Beckham Beauty gets it right every time, and so it is with her EyeWear eyeshadow sticks. The designer's hand can be seen in the exacting, creamy yet crease-proof formulations that incorporate smoothing, firming skincare benefits, as well as the just-so shades, from playful Sunflower to Trench, matte beige and every bit as useful as its name suggests.



VICTORIA BECKHAM BEAUTY EYEWEAR EYESHADOW STICKS IN SUNFLOWER AND TRENCH, £30 EACH

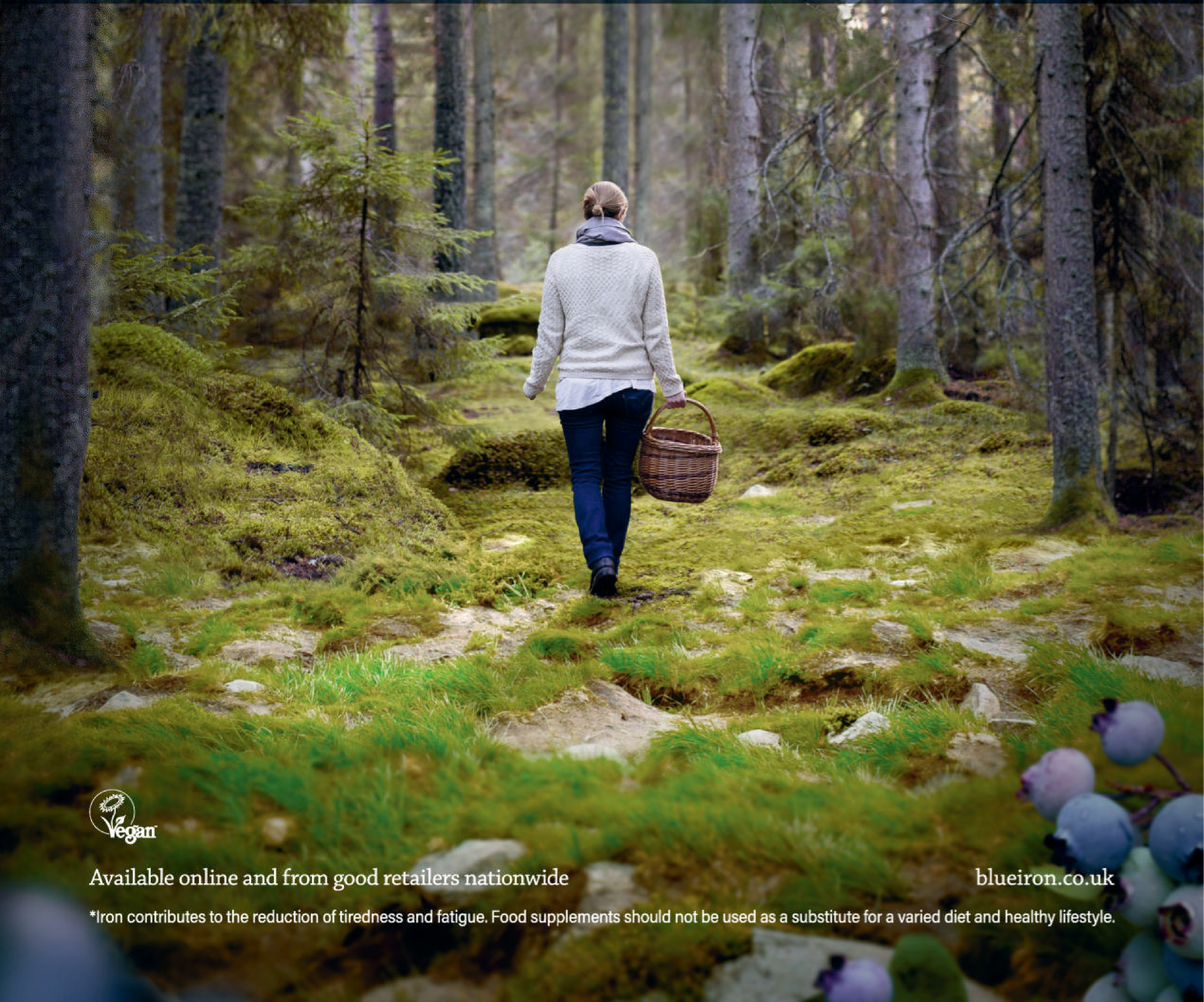
PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID VENNI, MATTHEW EADES

A WILDLY DIFFERENT KIND OF IRON SUPPLEMENT

Our wild Nordic blueberries are harvested by hand in the Finnish wilderness for their unique flavour. With our micro-encapsulated absorption formula, BlueIron is a tasty, gentle and effective source of iron.

Feel less tired* | Great flavour | Gentle on stomach

Vegan
BLUEIRON™ Fe
LIQUID IRON
• Contains Nordic Blueberry concentrate for a great taste
• Iron contributes to the reduction of tiredness & fatigue
• Gentle on the stomach
FOOD SUPPLEMENT WITH ADDED VITAMINS
250ml



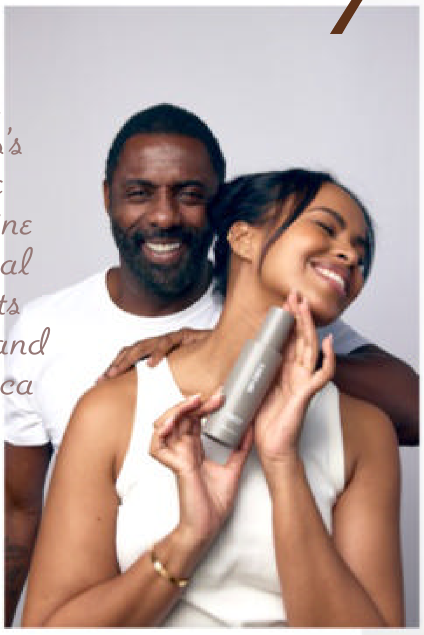
Vegan

Available online and from good retailers nationwide

blueiron.co.uk

*Iron contributes to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue. Food supplements should not be used as a substitute for a varied diet and healthy lifestyle.

Keeping it real



Sabrina and Idris's inclusive skincare line uses natural ingredients from East and West Africa

SKINCARE ENTREPRENEUR AND MODEL SABRINA ELBA CREDITS HER MOTHER'S 'BACK TO BASICS' ATTITUDE (AND HER HUSBAND'S QUESTIONS) FOR THE SUCCESS OF THEIR BRAND S'ABLE LABS

A complicated, multistep skincare routine was my way of rebelling against my mother's 'less is more', DIY attitude to cosmetics – she used to make her little potions and masks in our kitchen in Canada using traditional East African ingredients with me in the background telling her that she just hadn't discovered Sephora yet. But now – particularly after the return of my adult acne – I've come full circle and completely understand her approach… Turns out, she was right!

To this day, my mother is a huge source of inspiration for me. My and Idris's skincare line, S'Able Labs, came about for a number of reasons – a combination of being in lockdown and seeking inclusive wellness solutions, researching ingredients and almost accidentally getting into skincare – but at its heart, it invokes the same minimal methods that my mum advocates. We involve as few unnecessary chemicals as possible and use what we know works by embracing all the amazing anti-inflammatory, antioxidant-rich ingredients from across the African continent. And while these ingredients are hugely beneficial to everyone (after all, all skin, be it male, female, Black, white, functions the same at a cellular level), they're particularly good for people with melanated skin; those in the Black Seed Toner, for instance, tackle hyperpigmentation preventively, which for me has been life-changing.

Skincare really helps me to feel like I have the grooming basics constantly covered, which is something I'm increasingly aware of now that I'm in the public eye more. It's much harder to have a sloppy Joe kind of a day, which can suck! But once you've been photographed and seen, for example, what the back of your head looks like, I wouldn't be being honest if I said it doesn't change your relationship with your looks. You see yourself from angles that you would never have even considered before, so it inevitably becomes something that you give more thought to.

I realise going into business with your spouse isn't for everyone, but it's worked for us. It's given us a shared goal; the 'lab' is an experimental place where, together, we can create anything we feel is underrepresented – not just in skincare, but in the wider wellness space. And because I've always been an early adopter of new trends in skincare – I used to buy and try every single product as it came out – I take a lot for granted. On the other hand, Idris, as someone who had only ever used Vaseline on his skin, didn't have any preconceived notions or education around skincare, so he'd ask the most simple questions that would make me rethink everything. Why do you need a toner? What's it actually doing? Why can't all these things be done together? Having multitasking products comes from him – his input has been a blessing. And it's worked both ways because now he knows what a peptide is!

As far as my own routine goes (and, in fact, the same applies to Idris), I use The Core Collection daily – the cleanser followed by the toner (made from the black [nigella] seeds my dad had in his tea every single day and that he believed were the secret to living for ever), and then the Baobab Moisturiser. If I've been wearing heavier makeup, I'll use the Rooibos Micellar Water ahead of cleansing, and once a week, I'll mask with the Qasil Exfoliating Mask. I also use Sunday Riley U.F.O. Ultra-Clarifying Face Oil, which I am obsessed with and have been using for years, as it was one of the only products that kept my adult acne at bay. It's not drying or irritating but, at the same time, it really clears out the skin. Although my acne is under control now, I don't know if I'll ever stop using it… unless, of course, I can create something similar! Also, as I have chronic dry lips (which is just so irritating), I don't go to bed without my Laneige Lip Sleeping Mask on.

I've had to get so good at keeping up with Idris that I can now do full-on glam makeup in five to 10 minutes. My trick is that I will use one thing for everything. I'll start with Rose Inc Skin Enhance Luminous Tinted Serum (this brand is great; Rosie [Huntington-Whiteley] has done an amazing job of putting innovation, ingredients and colour together); then I'll use Charlotte Tilbury Beautiful Skin Sun-Kissed Glow Bronzer all over my face and as my eyeshadow, followed by Chanel Joues Contraste Powder Blush all over, too, including a little on my nose. If it's a big event, I'll add Charlotte Tilbury Pillow Talk Push Up Lashes! Mascara over my lash extensions and I always wear a lip gloss.

When it comes to hair, I'm so invested in my Dyson Airwrap styler that I have one for Europe, one for America and one for the UK. It's serious commitment, but that's because I do feel like it's the only thing that can make my hair look good. The other product that I don't go anywhere without is Kilian's Back to Black eau de parfum. I wear it every day; I even have it on (probably annoyingly) at breakfast. It's sweet in a kind of baby-powder way – the whole of the Kilian fragrance house is just amazing, in my opinion. At S'Able Labs, we definitely want to venture into creating fragrance eventually…

A lot of my sense of wellness is grounded in community; a breather for me is calling my sister or my brother or my mum and just sitting on my patio having a chat on the phone. I'm also a massive Pilates person. When I get the time, that's my favourite kind of 'serious' self-care… Let's call it that because you actually have to break a sweat.

My best piece of beauty advice? Do less. I learned this, of course, from my mum, and it's always in the back of my mind. But it doesn't just apply to beauty. As time goes on, I have an increasingly 'less is more' approach to my whole world.

CHARLOTTE TILBURY BEAUTIFUL SKIN SUN-KISSED GLOW BRONZER, £44

KILIAN BACK TO BLACK EDP, £185

Back to Black
by Kilian
aphrodisiac

DYSON AIRWRAP MULTI-STYLER, £479.99

LANEIGE LIP SLEEPING MASK, £19

LANEIGE
Sleeping Care
Lip Sleeping Mask

ROSE INC SKIN ENHANCE LUMINOUS TINTED SERUM, £39

CHANEL JOUES CONTRASTE POWDER BLUSH, £38

S'ABLE LABS ROOIBOS MICELLAR WATER, from £23

CHARLOTTE TILBURY PILLOW TALK PUSH UP LASHES! MASCARA, £26

Pillow talk
PUSH UP LASHES!

S'ABLE LABS QASIL EXFOLIATING MASK, £38

SUNDAY RILEY U.F.O. ULTRA-CLARIFYING FACE OIL, from £34

U.F.O.
ULTRA CLARIFYING FACE OIL
SUNDAY RILEY

AS TOLD TO: FLEUR FRUZZA. PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEXANDER PIPER

Glass act

SHINY NEW BUYS DESIGNED FOR MAXIMUM GLOSS

19/99
HIGH-SHINE GLOSS
BRILLANT INTENSÉMENT BRILLANT
LIPS EYES CHEEKS
Dullness Rescue
(radiance + revival serum)
VIOLETTE_FR
CHARLOTTE'S MAGIC BODY CREAM
The Gloss
SCALP & HAIR OIL
Nourish. Strengthen. Revive.
With Pumpkin, Black Cumin, Sweet Almond & Papaya
MONDAY MUSE
Kure BAZAAR
PARIS
Kosas
Glow I.V.
TOWER 28
lisa eldridge

19/99 Beauty High-Shine Gloss, £18
Tap on to eyelids, cheeks or lips for mirror-like shine.

Violette_FR Dullness Rescue Radiance + Revival Serum, £48
Antioxidant-rich, to protect and perk up tired skin for a post-facial glow.

Charlotte Tilbury Magic Body Cream, £49
All the glow-giving properties of the cult moisturiser, plus caffeine to stimulate circulation.

Kure Bazaar Gloss Nail Polish, £15
With tiny pearl pigments and a glossy finish that says laid-back glamour.

Monday Muse The Gloss Scalp & Hair Oil, £45
Root-to-tip care with nourishing omega oils for healthy shine.

Estée Lauder Bronze Goddess Highlighting Powder Gelée in Heatwave, £39
Apply over high points of the face for an opaline gleam that catches prettily under light.

Lisa Eldridge Gloss Embrace Lip Gloss in Dancing Rose, £20
Impeccably chic violet and ballet-slipper pink pigments in a plush, balmy texture.

Kosas Glow I.V. Vitamin-Infused Skin Enhancer, £38
Combining coverage and glow, it's Instagram's Paris filter in a tube.

Tower 28 Beauty SuperDew Highlighter Balm, £19
A translucent, almost wet-look sheen that works on all skin tones.

COMPILED BY: PHOEBE LEE. PHOTOGRAPHY: CHLOE MALLETT

KITE: A NEW FESTIVAL OF IDEAS AND MUSIC

MUSIC

HOT CHIP—SUEDE—PRETENDERS
CANDI STATON—DJANGO DJANGO—EZRA COLLECTIVE
BAXTER DURY—SOFIA KOURTESIS—SARATHY KORWAR
MAUSKOVIC DANCE BAND—LYNKS—DECIUS
DAVID HOLMES—DJ PAULETTE—PRIMA QUEEN

IDEAS

DAME JOAN COLLINS—DAVID BADDIEL JEWS DON'T COUNT
CHRIS PATTEN & RANA MITTER ON CHINA & THE WEST
MUNROE BERGDORF—SIMON SINEK LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP
ALASTAIR CAMPBELL FIXING POLITICS—MARINA HYDE
RACHEL REEVES—PETER FRANKOPAN & GAIA VINCE
ADAM KAY—POLLY TOYNBEE & DARREN MCGARVEY
MEL GIEDROYC—NIHAL ARTHANAYAKE
ELIZABETH DAY—SUSANNA HOFFS

LIVE PODCASTS

MY TIME CAPSULE | THE BREAKUP MONOLOGUES | THE NEWS MEETING

COMEDY

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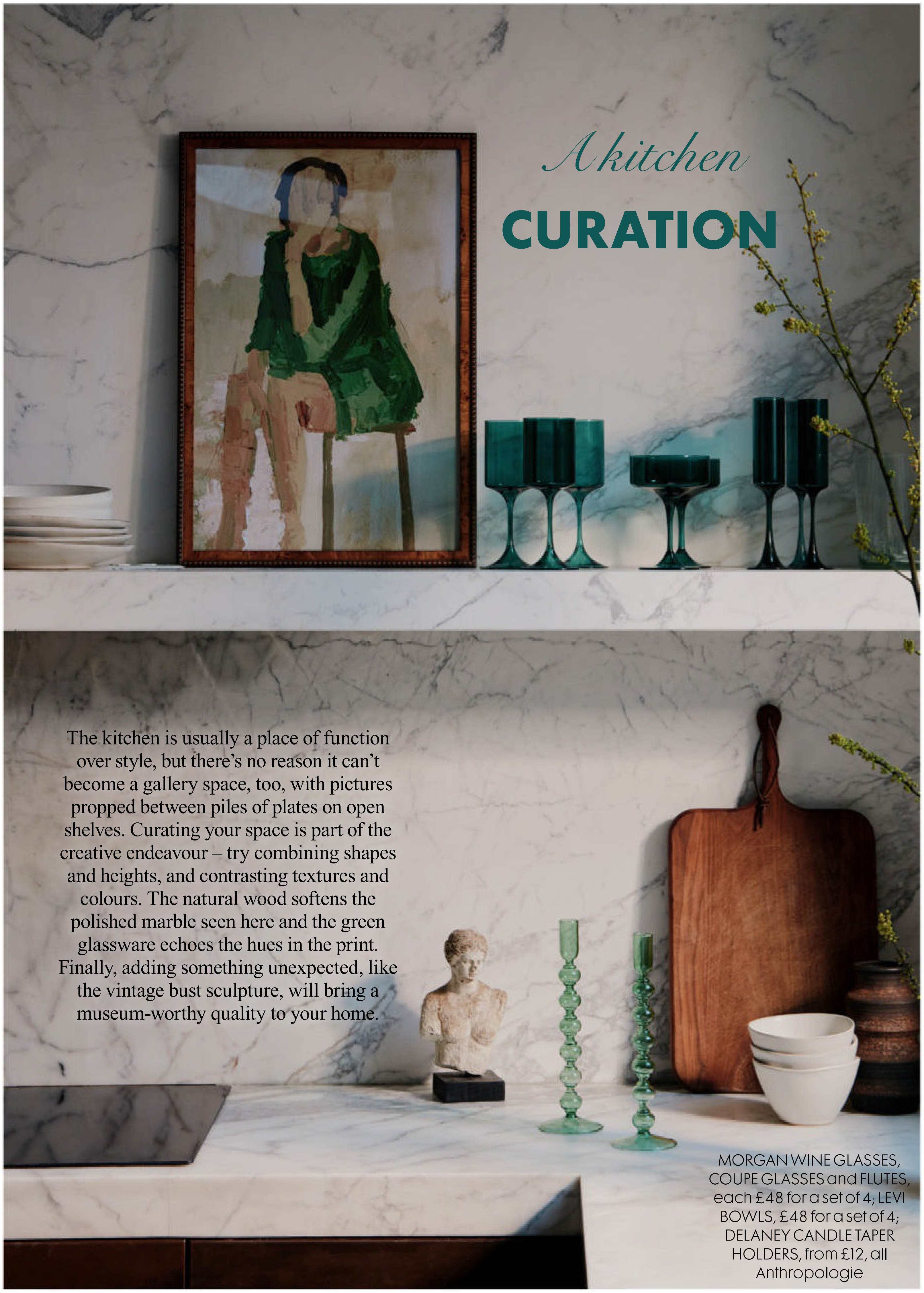
Heavenly Tortoise

LIVING

Edited by
Emma Franklin **&** *Sarah Keady*



A kitchen CURATION

The kitchen is usually a place of function over style, but there's no reason it can't become a gallery space, too, with pictures propped between piles of plates on open shelves. Curating your space is part of the creative endeavour – try combining shapes and heights, and contrasting textures and colours. The natural wood softens the polished marble seen here and the green glassware echoes the hues in the print. Finally, adding something unexpected, like the vintage bust sculpture, will bring a museum-worthy quality to your home.

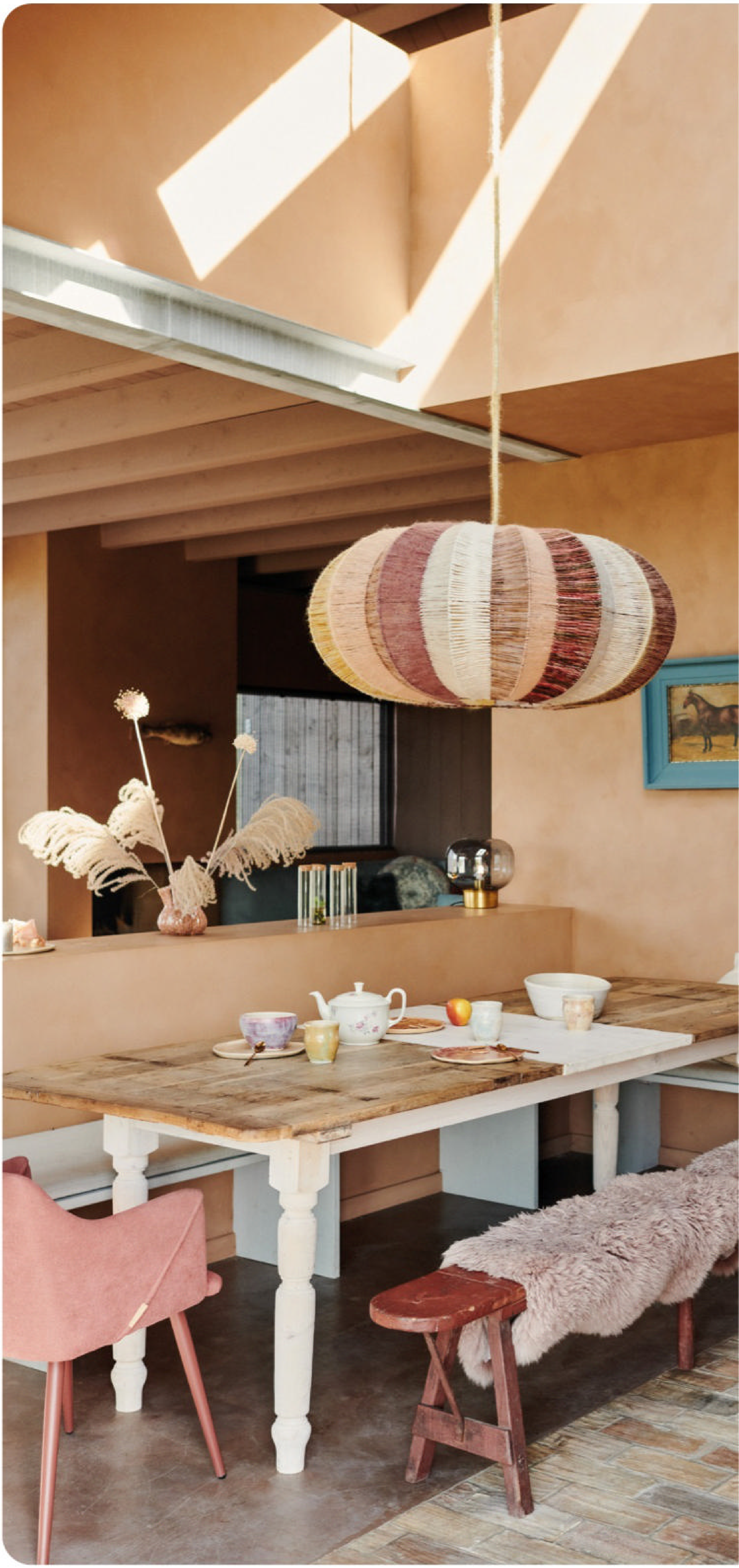
MORGAN WINE GLASSES, COUPE GLASSES and FLUTES, each £48 for a set of 4; LEVI BOWLS, £48 for a set of 4; DELANEY CANDLE TAPER HOLDERS, from £12, all Anthropologie

Creativity before CONSUMPTION

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX TO GIVE YOUR SPACE A PLAYFUL, PLANET-FRIENDLY UPDATE

Feature *James Cunningham*

Photography *Catherine Gratwicke, Marnie Hawson/Living Inside*



CREATE

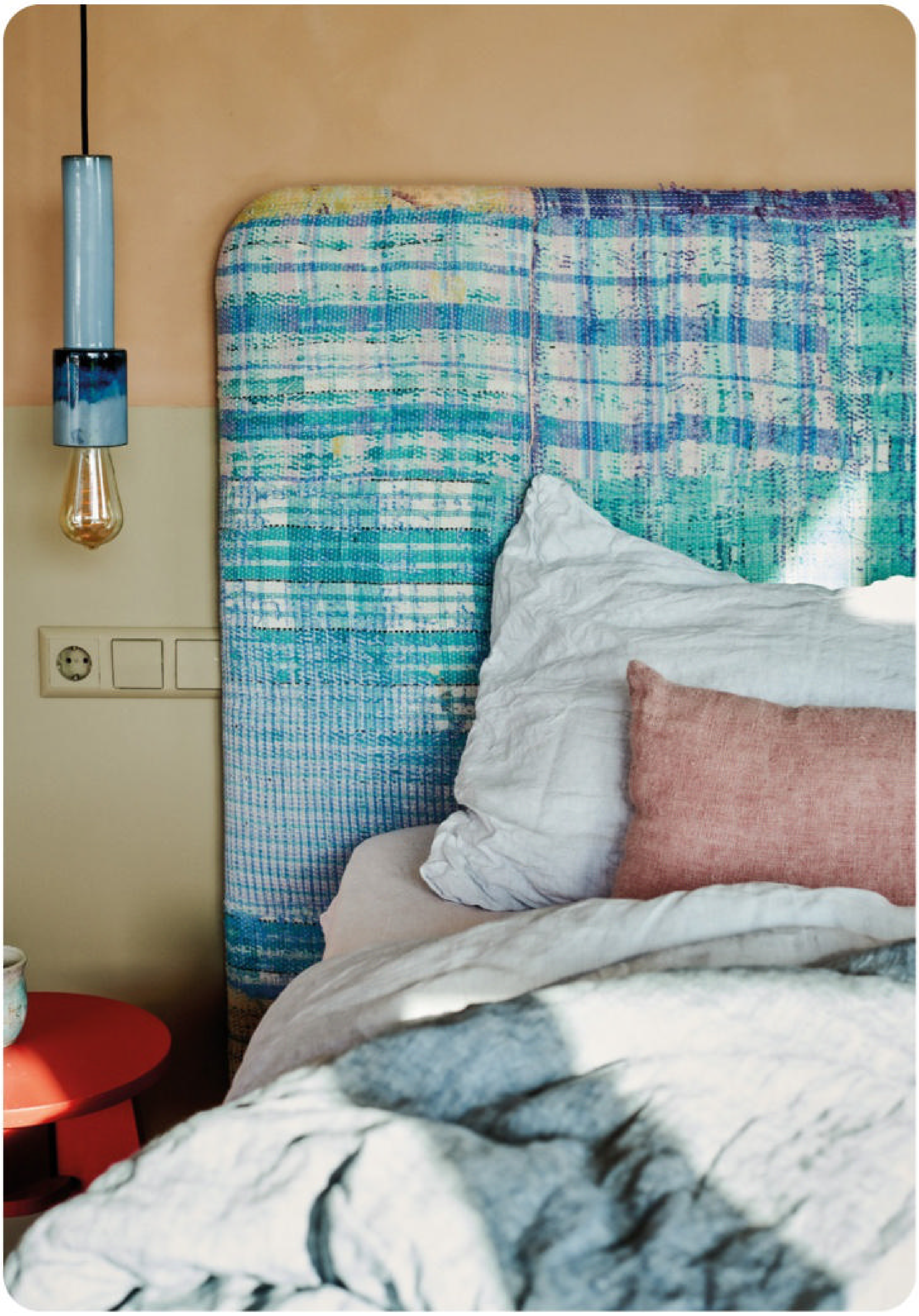
Whether it's a clay mug or a knitted throw, handcrafted objects always have more character than their mass-produced counterparts – and this is especially true when you have made the piece yourself. The lampshade shown here was created by its owner using a variety of yarns that subtly echo the colours in the room, creating a homespun focal point.

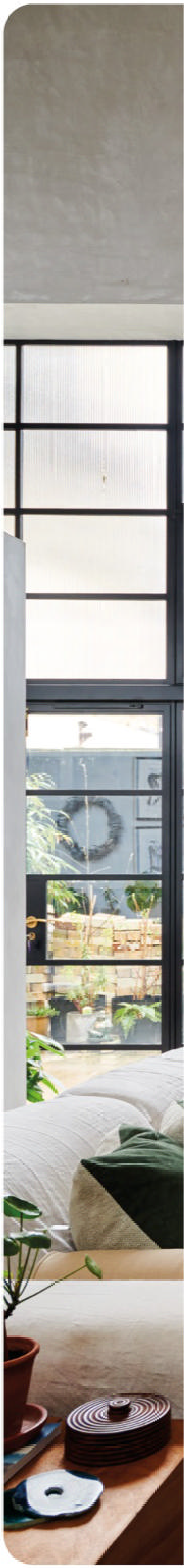
Try your hand at crafting with brands that offer DIY kits to simplify the job – try Dannells for lighting, Sculpd for pottery and Make & Mend for embroidery

SALVAGE

From treasure-trove antique shops to finds on the get-it-or-it's-gone Facebook Marketplace, it's easy to source secondhand items that will add character to your home or garden. The experts at English Salvage, for example, have a stock of reclaimed baths in materials including cast iron, copper and marble that would make excellent outdoor tubs (always consider re-enamelling or resurfacing the inside). Even the most rudimentary of plumbing solutions could make this an indulgent option for hot days or a post-workout soak – just keep a towel close at hand!

Linen bath towels, £60 each, Bed Threads



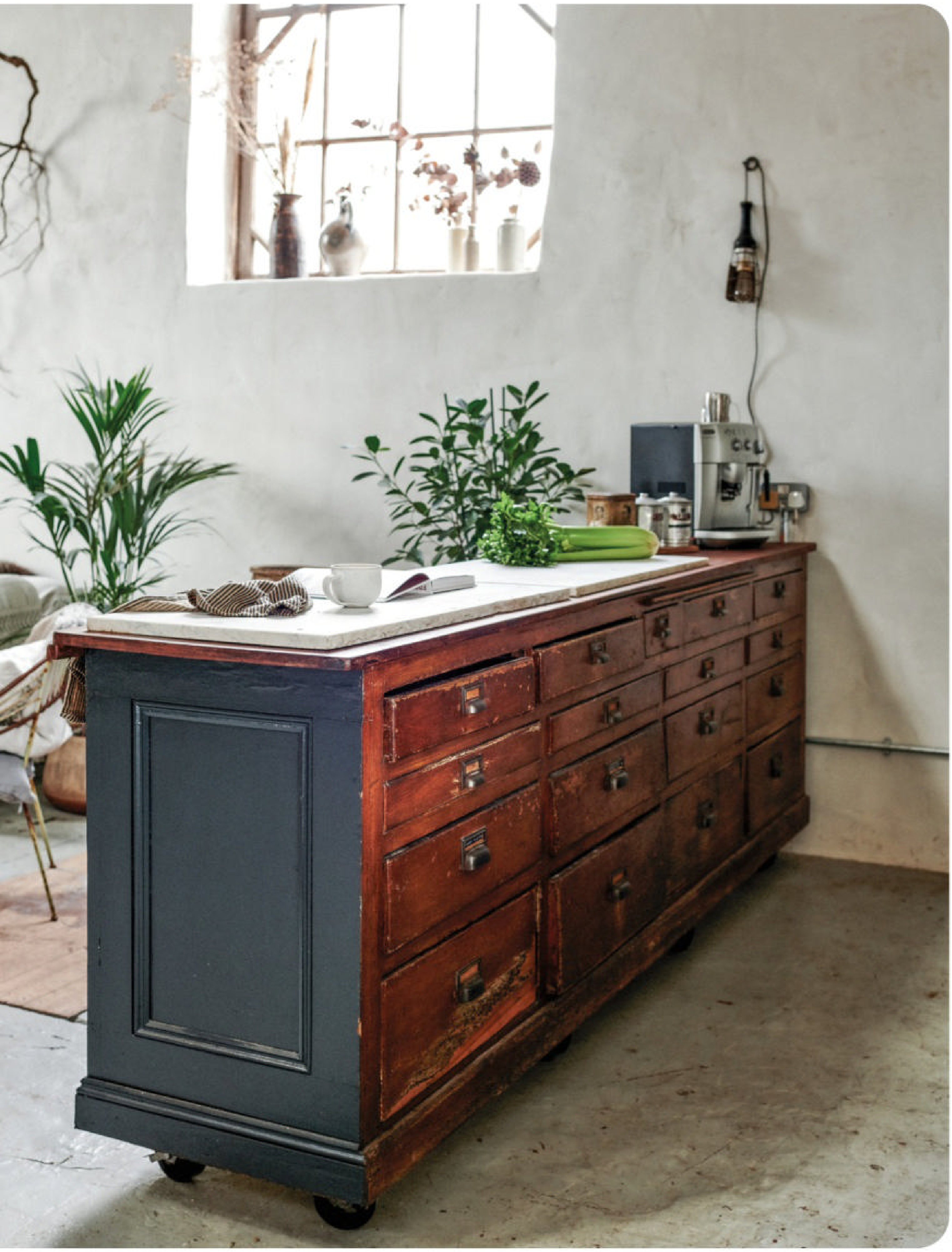


REDISCOVER

Use vintage materials – such as this headboard's Indian fabric, which was unearthed in Paris – to bring colour and pattern into a space. As well as being a sustainable option (an old tablecloth, for example, could be repurposed as chic, cafe-style curtains), they are often more affordable: flea markets can have tables piled high with folded offcuts ready to be haggled for, while there is a vast selection to be found on Etsy. Wash the fabric first with a 'colour catcher' in the drum, then dry in the open air for maximum freshness.

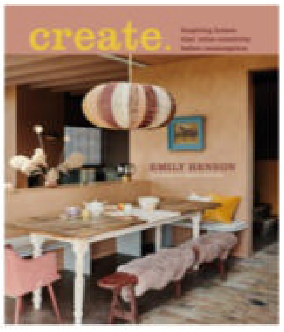
REVIVE

If your sofas and armchairs are past their best, for an inexpensive fix that doesn't involve reupholstering, use a length of fabric (you may need to sew different panels together for bigger pieces of furniture) and fold it in place over the seat cushions and back – Velcro can help to secure the fabric in place. If a sofa has lost its shape, replacing the cushion fillings can be a surprisingly cost-effective solution, but remember that feathers will need daily plumping compared with easier-to-maintain foam. Extra cushions or a bed blanket will create comfort, too – try the pretty options at Caravane.



REPURPOSE

Local auction rooms and online marketplaces have many love-worn pieces of furniture that can, with an alteration or two, become useful and attractive again. The old draper's counter shown on the left was fitted with castors to allow it to be moved easily, making it a useful addition to the kitchen. Slabs of marble make a practical cover for its chipped and scratched surface. On the far left, a simple table has been adapted to house a bathroom basin. The wood's weathered appearance combines with the exposed pipework to create a charmingly rustic look.



Most projects taken from Create (Ryland Peters & Small, £25) by Emily Henson, with photography by Catherine Gratwicke, out now

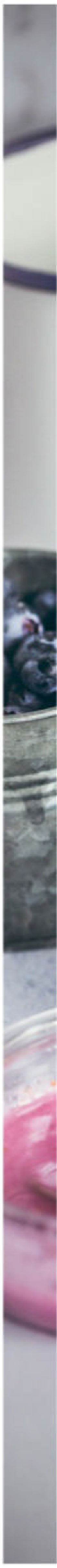
Sweet on
NEW YORK

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A SUGAR HIGH, THERE'S NO BETTER PLACE THAN MANHATTAN, WHERE THE STREETS ARE LINED WITH BAKERIES AND CAFES AND THE RECIPES ARE AS ICONIC AS THE CITY

Photography
Lisa Nieschlag and Joe Thomas

> *'You need to look twice to see New York's small, hidden cafes and restaurants. They are perfect for whiling away romantic hours with your loved one and enjoying all kinds of sweet and indulgent temptations'*

VIRGIN
CTORIA



Blueberry muffins

MAKES 12

- **100g unsalted butter**
- **1 organic lemon**
- **220g blueberries (frozen if fresh are unavailable)**
- **125ml milk**
- **85g crème fraîche**
- **2 extra large eggs**
- **2tsp vanilla sugar**
- **100g caster sugar**
- **250g plain flour**
- **2tsp baking powder**

YOU WILL ALSO NEED

- **60g caster sugar**

1 Melt butter in a small pan. Wash the lemon in warm water and pat dry before finely grating 1tsp of the zest and squeezing 2tsp of the juice. Rinse the blueberries carefully and pat dry.
2 Preheat oven to 180°C (mark 4). Mix the butter, milk and crème fraîche together in a bowl until smooth. In a second bowl, whisk the eggs, vanilla sugar and 100g caster sugar together until foamy. Stir in the butter mixture, lemon zest and juice. Sift the flour, baking powder and a pinch of salt together, and gently fold in. Lightly fold in most of the blueberries, reserving about 30g for the topping.
3 Place 12 paper muffin cases in a 12-hole muffin tray and divide batter equally between them. Bake in the preheated oven for 20-25min until golden brown (test they are done by pushing a cocktail stick into the middle of a muffin – it should come out clean). Allow to cool a little, then remove from the tray and leave to cool completely.
4 Put the 60g caster sugar in a small bowl. Push the reserved blueberries through a sieve, catching the juice in the bowl, and mix with the sugar until smooth. Spread on top of the cooled muffins.

Russian chocolate coffee cake

MAKES 1 CAKE

FOR THE DOUGH
- **425g plain flour, plus extra to dust**
- **80g caster sugar, plus extra to sprinkle**
- **2tsp fast-action dried yeast**
- **3 large eggs**
- **3½tbsp lukewarm milk**
- **50g soured cream**
- **85g unsalted butter, softened**
- **70g raisins**

FOR THE FILLING
- **75g chopped almonds**
- **1tbsp runny honey**
- **100g dark chocolate, chopped**
- **75g unsalted butter**
- **3tbsp cocoa powder**
- **3¼tbsp caster sugar**

1 To make the dough, mix the flour, sugar, yeast and ¼tsp salt together in a bowl. Mix in the eggs, milk, soured cream and butter to make a dough. Transfer dough to a lightly floured work surface and knead for about 8min until it is smooth and elastic. Add the raisins and briefly knead them in. Return the dough to a lightly greased bowl, cover and let the dough prove for about 2½hr.
2 To make the filling, toast the almonds in a dry frying pan until golden brown. Stir in the honey to quickly caramelise the almonds. Melt chocolate and butter together over a bain-marie, stirring until smooth. Cool, then stir in the cocoa powder and caster sugar. Finally, mix in the almonds.
3 Line a baking sheet with baking parchment. Roll out the dough on a floured work surface to a rectangle measuring about 35 x 50cm. Spread the chocolate mixture evenly over the dough, leaving a narrow border all around the edge. Roll up tightly and evenly from a short side, then cut the roll lengthways in ½ with a sharp knife. Holding 1 end of each ½, carefully braid the 2 lengths together, making sure the cut sides showing the layers of dough and chocolate are always on top. Shape into a ring on the prepared baking sheet and press ends together to seal. Cover and leave to prove for 30min.
4 Preheat oven to 180°C (mark 4) and bake for about 40min. If the top of the cake starts to brown too quickly, cover with foil. Leave to cool completely and then sprinkle with caster sugar to serve.

Peanut butter donuts

MAKES 10

FOR THE DOUGH
- **285g plain flour, plus extra to dust**
- **2tsp fast-action dried yeast**
- **25g caster sugar**
- **2tsp vanilla sugar**
- **25g unsalted butter, softened and diced**
- **125ml lukewarm milk**
- **1 large egg**

FOR THE ICING
- **100g dark chocolate**
- **30g peanut butter**
- **1tsp caster sugar**
- **1tsp coconut oil**

YOU WILL ALSO NEED
- **1.5 litres vegetable oil, to deep-fry**
- **40g peanuts, finely chopped, to sprinkle**

1 To make the dough, mix the flour, yeast, caster sugar, vanilla sugar and a pinch of salt together in a bowl. Make a well in the centre and add the diced butter, milk and egg. Mix to make a dough, then knead for about 7min until smooth and elastic. Cover the bowl and let the dough prove for 1-2hr until it has doubled in volume.

2 Divide dough into 10 pieces, each weighing about 50g. Shape into balls on a lightly floured work surface. Sprinkle surface with another layer of flour, put the balls on top, cover and leave to prove again for 20min. Push your thumb through the middle of each dough ball to create a hole and make circular movements with your thumb to widen the hole until it is 3-4cm in diameter. Cover and leave the dough rings on a floured work surface to prove for another 15min.

3 Meanwhile, in a large pan, heat 4cm oil for deep-frying to about 175°C. Using a large, slotted spoon, lower the donuts into the hot oil 1 at a time and deep-fry in batches until golden brown, turning once. Drain on kitchen paper and leave to cool completely.

4 To make the icing, break the chocolate into small pieces and melt with the other ingredients in a bowl over a bain-marie, stirring constantly until smooth. Allow to cool a little, then spread on top of the donuts. Sprinkle the chopped peanuts on 1 side of the icing before it sets. Serve the donuts once the icing has set.

Triple choc cookies

MAKES 16

- **150g plain flour**
- **¾tsp baking powder**
- **3 heaped tsp cocoa powder**
- **100g unsalted butter, softened and diced**
- **55g caster sugar**
- **2tsp vanilla sugar**
- **1 extra large egg**
- **55g white chocolate**
- **55g dark chocolate**
- **55g milk chocolate**

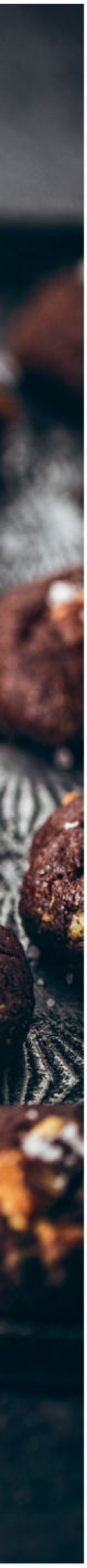
YOU WILL ALSO NEED

- **Flaked sea salt, to sprinkle**

1 Sift flour, baking powder and cocoa powder into a mixing bowl. Beat the butter with the sugars in another bowl until light and creamy. Beat in the egg, then gradually stir in the dry ingredients until combined. Chop the white, dark and milk chocolates and fold in, then chill for 20min.

2 Preheat oven to 175°C (mark 3) and line a baking sheet with baking parchment. Roll mixture into 16 balls, each about 4cm in diameter. Place the balls, well spaced apart, on the prepared baking sheet and press to flatten slightly.

3 Sprinkle the cookies with a little sea salt and bake in the preheated oven for 12-15min. When the cookies come out of the oven, they will still seem quite soft, but will firm up on the baking sheet as they cool.



Almond rugelach with apricots and pistachios

MAKES 16

FOR THE DOUGH
- 100g unsalted butter, softened
- 75g full fat cream cheese
- 1 large egg yolk
- 125g plain flour
- 25g ground almonds
- 2tsp vanilla sugar
- ¼tsp ground cinnamon

FOR THE FILLING
- 25g chopped almonds
- 125g apricot jam

YOU WILL ALSO NEED
- 25g pistachio kernels
- 25g brown sugar

1 To make the dough, cut the butter into small pieces, place in a bowl with the cream cheese and egg yolk, and stir until smooth. In another bowl, mix the flour with the almonds, vanilla sugar, cinnamon and a pinch of salt, then slowly knead into the butter mixture until you have a smooth dough. Shape the dough into a ball, press down to flatten it slightly, wrap in clingfilm and chill for at least 1hr.

2 To make the filling, toast the almonds briefly in a dry frying pan until golden. For the topping, finely grind the pistachios and sugar in a food processor and spread in an even layer on the work surface. Roll out the dough over the pistachio mixture into a disk approximately 4mm thick and 26-28cm in diameter, turning the dough over once or twice so it is thinly coated with the nut mixture on both sides. Neaten the edges.

3 Preheat oven to 180°C (mark 4). Spread the apricot jam over the dough, leaving a border of about 2cm round the edge and a circle of about 7cm in diameter uncovered in the middle. Sprinkle the toasted almonds over the jam. Use a pizza cutter to slice the disk into 16 equal wedges. Roll each wedge up, starting at the wide end and finishing at the point. Press down gently on the points to seal the rolls.

4 Line a baking sheet with baking parchment and arrange the rugelach on top, evenly spaced apart with the points facing down. Bake in the preheated oven for 20-24min until golden brown and crisp. Transfer to a wire rack and leave to cool completely.

Taken from In Love With New York (Hardie Grant) by Lisa Nieschlag and Lars Wentrup. Photography © Joe Thomas

THE BEST OF BRITISH DESIGN

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WHITSTABLE
IN BLUSH PINK

ECO FRIENDLY

Country Living kitchens are FSC certified and built from sustainably sourced materials

Country Living kitchens are the perfect choice for those dreaming of a welcoming farmhouse design.

The Whitstable blends practicality with style and warmth. Crafted in classic Shaker style with subtle modern touches, it comes in 11 beautiful colours, including new-to-the-collection dramatic Black and pastel-perfect Blush Pink, shown here. All colours offer a premium satin finish and can be mixed and matched to create a truly bespoke look to set your kitchen apart.

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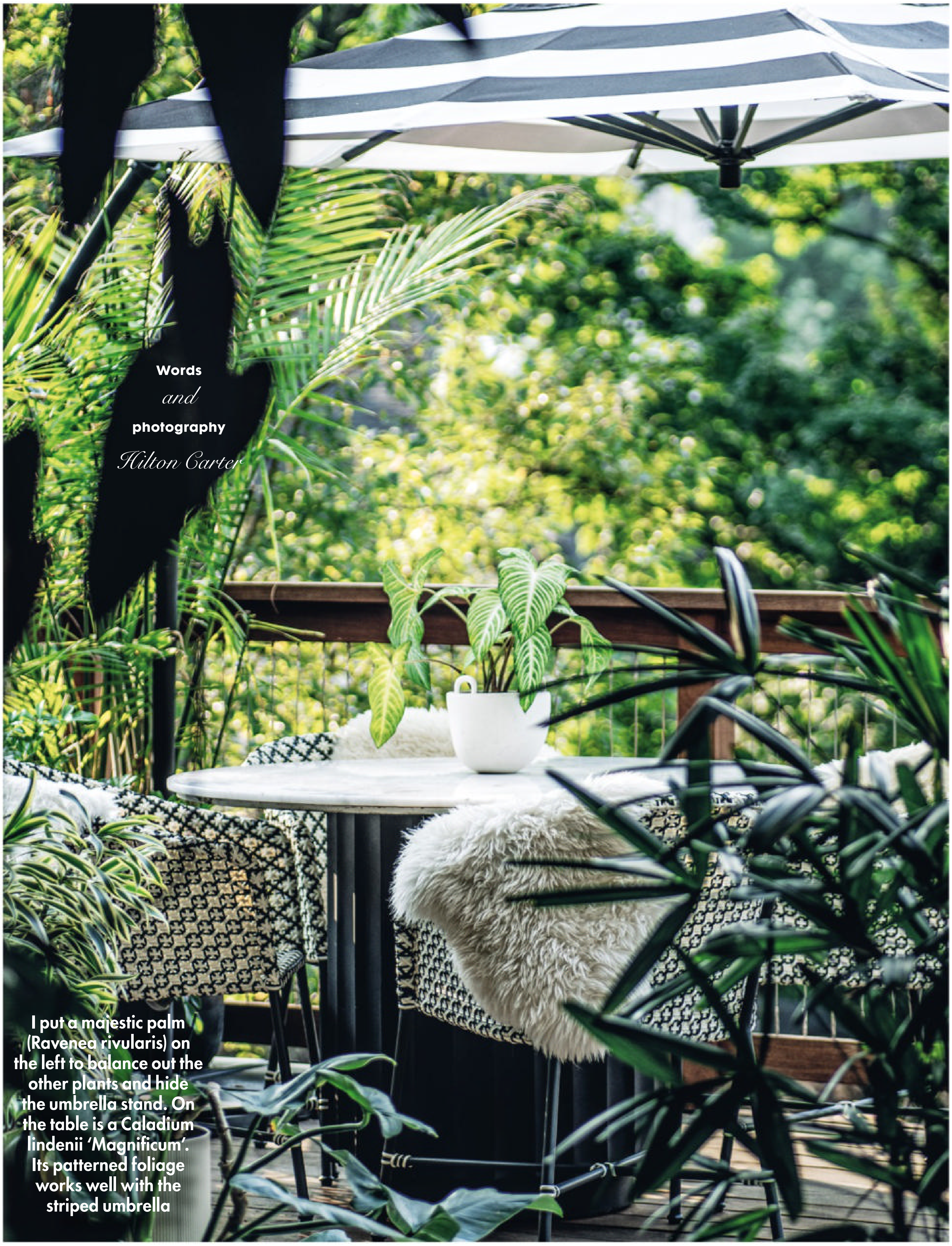


Words *and* **photography** *Hilton Carter*

I put a majestic palm (Ravenea rivularis) on the left to balance out the other plants and hide the umbrella stand. On the table is a Caladium lindenii 'Magnificum'. Its patterned foliage works well with the striped umbrella

WHY NOT TAKE YOUR POT PLANTS OUTDOORS FOR A SUMMER HOLIDAY? POP THEM IN A SHELTERED POSITION AND BRING THEM INDOORS OVERNIGHT ON COOLER EVENINGS. PLANT LOVER HILTON CARTER SHARES HOW TO 'PLANT STYLE' YOUR HOME TO BRING JOY

I styled plants on the corner of the decking, so as not to block the staircase. If you're using cacti in high-traffic areas such as this, try thornless varieties

I have spoken a lot about bringing the outdoors in, but there are times of the year – spring, summer and parts of early autumn, depending on where you live – that you can keep the outdoors… outdoors. Basically, what I'm saying is that our indoor plants can also take a much-needed summer holiday.

We work hard to recreate the climate that our plants need to thrive indoors by providing them with humidifiers and misting them weekly. Thankfully, when the seasons change and it gets a little warmer, we get to take a break and allow the outdoor elements to do the heavy lifting. But what nature can't do is arrange our plants around the exterior of our homes in a way that is stylish and practical. That, my friends, is up to you.

Before you move your plants outside, you'll need to slowly acclimatise them to the elements by bringing them out for a few hours under shade and then back indoors overnight, repeating this process for at least two to three days and gradually extending the amount of time they spend outdoors. Once you've checked the weather and that the temperature will remain warm overnight (some house plants can tolerate periods of lower temperatures), then you can have fun styling them.

Just as bringing tropical plants indoors can transform your home into an exotic destination, the same goes for styling plants outside. If you live in a mid-century modern home but want to feel as if you're in the Mediterranean, you can put sago palms (Cycas revoluta) and fan palms (Chamaerops humilis) on your terrace or veranda. If your look is more desert than tropical, you can style cacti and succulents outside and your home will look just like the area you're trying to recreate.

The style of your home is one thing to consider, but take note of the climate, too. For example, if you live somewhere that gets a lot of rain during spring and summer, you're not going to be successful using desert plants outside. By the same token, a fern-heavy look that requires high humidity is not going to work in an arid climate. Sometimes you have to work inside the box to make sure the plants that you've moved outdoors for the season return alive and healthy in autumn/winter.

As someone who has lived most of his life in a flat without access to a terrace, patio or deck, when my wife and I purchased a home it was of utmost importance to have outdoor space. Fortunately, we were able to buy an American colonial-style home built in 1905. Tucked between evergreens, it was a home I knew we needed to claim as our own.

As a lover of tropical plants, I knew that I would gravitate toward them when I had the opportunity to create a garden of my own. I have always been drawn to homes surrounded by a cluster of large palm trees. So when it came to styling the front of our home, which faces north, I went with a large spindle palm (Hyophorbe verschaffeltii) as our statement plant. I dressed it in an off-white planter in the style of our home, so it looked as if it had been growing there long before we arrived. I surrounded the palm with other tropicals, including a Philodendron bernardopazii, P. xanadu, an Australian tree fern (Dicksonia antarctica) and many others to make our home in Maryland feel like you might need your passport to get here.

The east side of our home, which gets plenty of morning sun, is where I created my own private desert with small and medium cacti and succulents. With these desert plants styled in porous pots, this area has a very different look and feel from the north side of the house.

Lastly, when it came to the south side, which is sun-kissed all day, sun-loving specimens on our deck were a must. When taking your indoor plants outside, never place one that prefers low light levels somewhere that gets direct sun. That will be the death of that plant.

To keep the look clean and consistent, all the plants on the deck are in terracotta planters. I layered a grouping of plants on the right corner, so as not to block the path to the staircase.

Unlike the eastern side of the house, where we don't have a lot of foot traffic, here on the deck we do. During spring, summer and autumn, it becomes a lively space for hosting parties, for quiet mornings with a cup of coffee, and downtime with the family. If you're styling cacti in high-traffic areas such as this, be mindful to use thornless plants.

When styling the exterior of a client's home, I use exactly the same strategies and techniques to ensure not only that the plants thrive in their new outdoor locations, but also that they're able to move back indoors safely at the end of summer.

TIPS FOR STYLING HOUSE PLANTS OUTDOORS

Check the weather forecast and what the temperature highs and lows will be before you move plants outside.

Introduce plants to outdoor life slowly. Put them outside – under shade – for a few hours a day for two to three days before leaving them outdoors for the season.

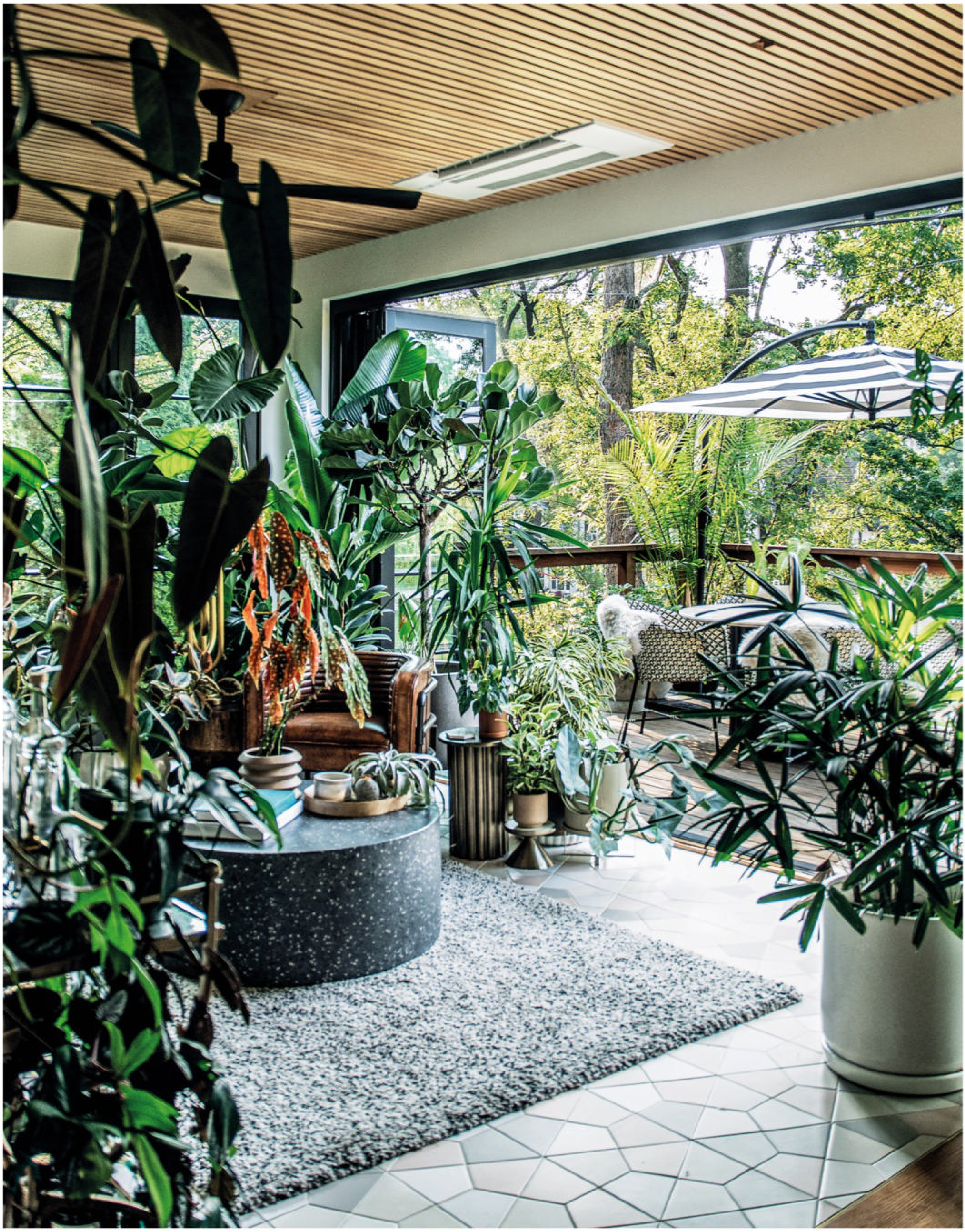
The type of light your plants require indoors will be the same outdoors. If your house plants thrive in indirect light, placing them in dappled or lightly shaded areas will be perfect.

If you have direct-sun-loving plants, you'll want to gradually relocate them to sunny outdoor spots. Try placing them on the eastern side of the house for a week or so before moving them to the south or west for the rest of the season.

Beware of local wildlife that might like the taste of your house plants. Plants such as Calathea and Alocasia are tempting snacks for rabbits and deer.

If you bought a plant during spring or summer and have kept it outside all season, make sure to have a plan for its position once it has to come indoors.

Creating groups of potted plants is a great styling concept. Here, cacti and succulents are styled together to create a 'desert' moment



Looking out from the living room to the deck, I've used a large pencil cactus (Euphorbia tirucalli), a large standard spineless prickly pear and small variegated prickly pear cactus (both varieties of Opuntia ellisiana) and a Euphorbia ingens. I also added a few other sun lovers, like a ponytail palm (Beaucarnea recurvata), sago palm (Cycas revoluta) and gold dust croton (Codiaeum variegatum 'Gold Dust').

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PERFECT STATEMENT PLANTS

MINIMALIST

Olive (Olea europaea). An olive tree works perfectly in a minimalist space, thanks to its delicate silvery green leaves, which are simple in design and sit perfectly against the neutral colours of homes decorated in this style.

MODERN

Bird of paradise (Strelitzia). A large tropical plant with broad, sleek foliage and vibrant flowers. It complements the clean lines and simple colour palette of modern design.

BOHO CHIC

Fiddle-leaf fig (Ficus lyrata). For me, the ever-trendy fiddle-leaf fig fits best in a boho chic room, where its glossy dark green leaves and elegant stance can add to the quirky, playful vibe associated with this style.

INDUSTRIAL

Candelabra tree (Euphorbia ingens). The sculptural shape and simple green lines of the candelabra tree make it perfect for an industrial or loft-style interior, which typically has exposed metal beams, brick walls and straight lines.

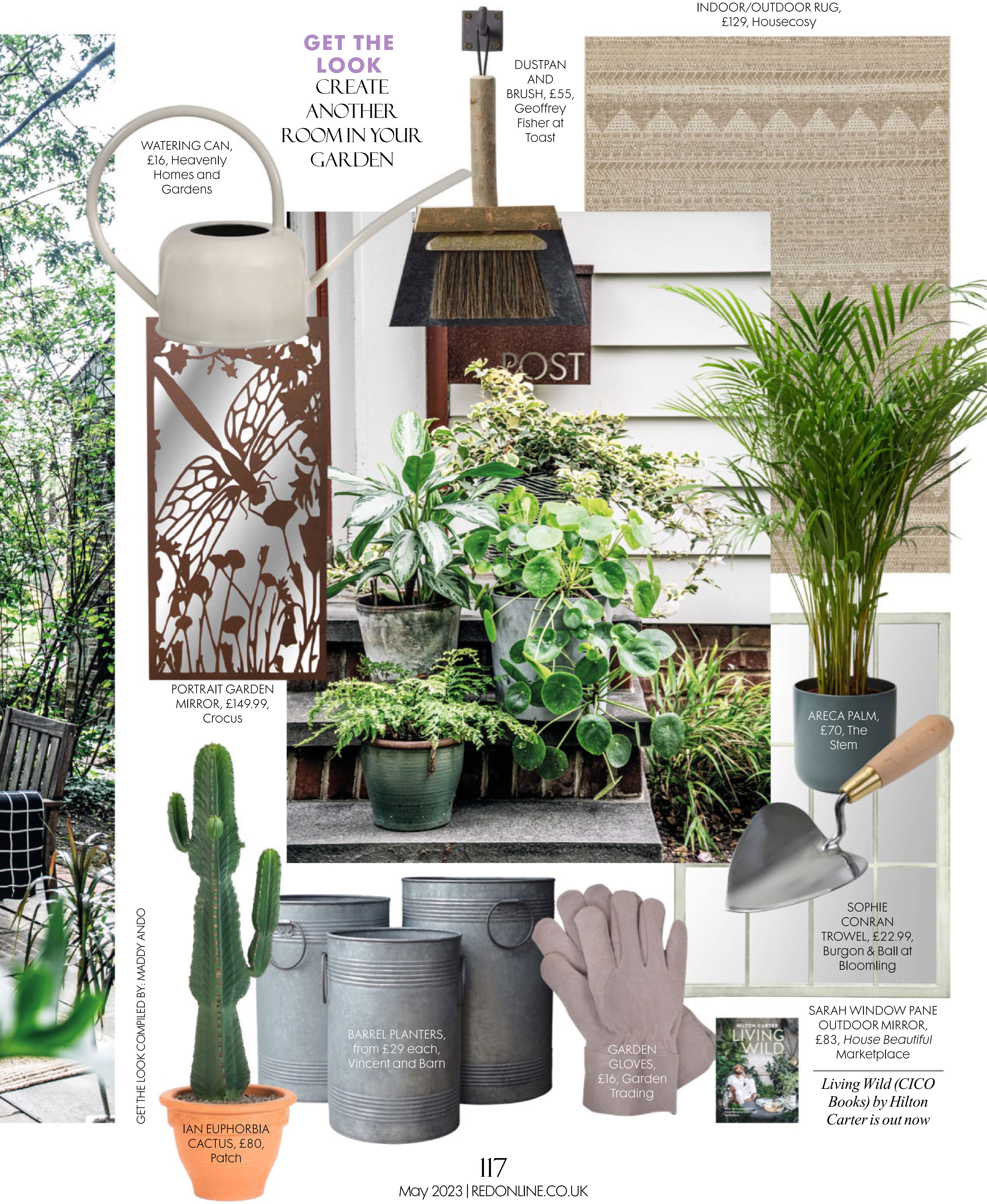
SCANDINAVIAN

Banyan (Ficus benghalensis 'Audrey'). The clean, off-white trunk and branches, plus large, glossy oval leaves, would work well in a Scandi-styled space that aims for simplicity in form, colour and texture.

Right: plants styled outside the home of designer Jamie Campbell and artist Drury Bynum. On the table is a Song of India (Dracaena reflexa) and a Peperomia obtusifolia.

GET THE LOOK

CREATE ANOTHER ROOM IN YOUR GARDEN



WATERING CAN, £16, Heavenly Homes and Gardens

DUSTPAN AND BRUSH, £55, Geoffrey Fisher at Toast

INDOOR/OUTDOOR RUG, £129, Housecosy

PORTRAIT GARDEN MIRROR, £149.99, Crocus

ARECA PALM, £70, The Stem

SOPHIE CONRAN TROWEL, £22.99, Burgon & Ball at Bloomling

IAN EUPHORBIA CACTUS, £80, Patch

BARREL PLANTERS, from £29 each, Vincent and Barn

GARDEN GLOVES, £16, Garden Trading

SARAH WINDOW PANE OUTDOOR MIRROR, £83, *House Beautiful* Marketplace

Living Wild (CICO Books) by Hilton Carter is out now

GET THE LOOK COMPILED BY: MADDY ANDO

Small brands WE LOVE

THESE EMERGING HOMEWARE BRANDS ARE THE ONES TO KNOW – AND SHOP – RIGHT NOW

Copper Dust

Founded by Vanessa Agyemang, this interior design studio and homeware brand is based in Greenwich. Noticing a gap in the market for luxury African-inspired decor, Vanessa uses her degree in interior architecture and design to champion 'slow design'. Whether it's a cushion or a lampshade, every piece is carefully considered before being produced.

copperdustlondon.com

Harlie Brown Studio

One-off ceramics are the talk of the town, and Harlie Brown Studio – which is based in Kent – creates small batch mugs, plates and vases that are brightly coloured and wonderfully unique. Each piece is made by Harlie using various techniques, such as slab building and pinching, which means no two pieces will ever be the same. Harlie's wiggle mugs are sure to be perfect for your morning coffee.

harliebrownstudio.co.uk

Anemone Interiors

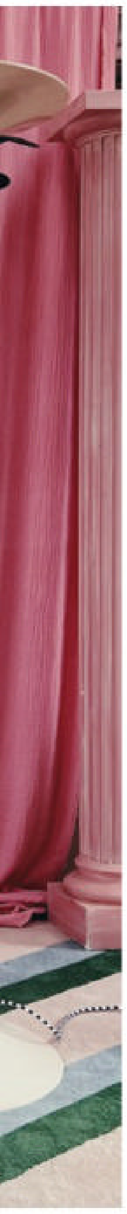
After a successful career in both women's fashion magazines and makeup artistry, Lia Briamonte decided to pursue her passion for antique shopping and transform it into a successful homeware business. Launched in 2019, Anemone Interiors is a one-stop shop for beautifully curated secondhand pieces that will naturally become the talking point of any space.

anemoneinteriors.co.uk

Alfred Newall

With a focus on utilitarian design, which makes his products practical as well as stylish, Alfred Newall creates popular furniture collections and works with clients on bespoke pieces in his practices in London and East Sussex. His Bobbin collection has become a hit in the interiors market due to its modern curvature and design. The collection consists of tables, cabinets and even a wall mirror.

alfrednewall.com



Alma Frames

Based in Greater Manchester, Alma Frames was created to house your treasured photos and prints in a beautiful and fun way. The frames' signature colourful wiggles are bound to make you smile. Founder Katie Allen makes sure that all components of the frames are made within 70 miles of Manchester, including glass from Wolverhampton and mounts from Holmfirth.
almaframes.com

Sabine Van der Sande

Fascinated by the psychology of textiles and how they provide protection and comfort, Sabine Van der Sande handweaves her own edit of rugs in north London. Her signature checked rug designs create a playful look underfoot. They are stocked on Glassette (as well as her own website), and she is available for bespoke requests.
loom.supply

Mairi Helena

Directly influenced by both her textile designer parents and the landscapes of Scotland, Mairi Helena's range of abstract wallcoverings, fabric and furniture pay homage to the country's environment, colours and wildlife. The collections incorporate different print processes, such as hand screen printing, that are a welcomed alternative to mass-market production.
mairihelena.co.uk

Table in the Sun

Need inspiration for your spring/summer tablescape? This newly launched tableware brand designs statement table runners, cloths and napkins. Inspired by all things travel – and specifically founder Lucy Williams's family trips to Devon and Cornwall – the blend of bold colours against white evokes a sense of nostalgia.
tableinthesun.net

Sunbeam Jackie

Elegant parasols and canopies are lovingly designed in a 12th century grain store in Cornwall by artistic couple Charlie and Katy Napier. Their first limited-edition run of parasols in 2011 was spotted by a buyer for Designers Guild and the rest is history. The couple source all of the fabric for the parasols, whether it's a vintage 1920s design or a present-day pattern, and each one is sold in perfect condition.
sunbeamjackie.com

WORDS: BECCA CULLUM-GREEN

EVERYTHING IN THE GARDEN IS LOVELY

IF YOU'RE A FAN OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS, THE *COUNTRY LIVING* MARKETPLACE IS PACKED WITH WONDERFUL PRODUCTS TO INSPIRE AND DELIGHT

Shop NOW!
COUNTRYLIVING SHOP.CO.UK/ RED-MAY

COUNTRY LIVING MARKETPLACE

The *Country Living* Marketplace is your one-stop shop for an amazing array of products, all created by skilled artisans and small, independent businesses. The collections change with the seasons to bring you the best of the best at any time of year, and now that spring has well and truly sprung, you'll find it's packed with beautiful products that celebrate the great outdoors. So whether you're buying a stylish bench for your own patio or looking for a nature-inspired gift for a floral-loving friend, you're sure to find something that's anything but common or garden!

PHOTOGRAPHY: SUSSIE BELL (STYLING: SELINA LAKE), POLLY WREFORD

COUNTRY LIVING LOVES ARTISANS

ARBOURFIELD

This innovative, Somerset-based company celebrates the best of timeless country style with its hand-forged, British-made garden benches crafted from durable steel with a white or galvanized-metal finish. Also available from Arbourfield are wool and cotton picnic rugs and rolls, textured pure-wool blankets and a delightful selection of home- and kitchenware.

FLORADORE

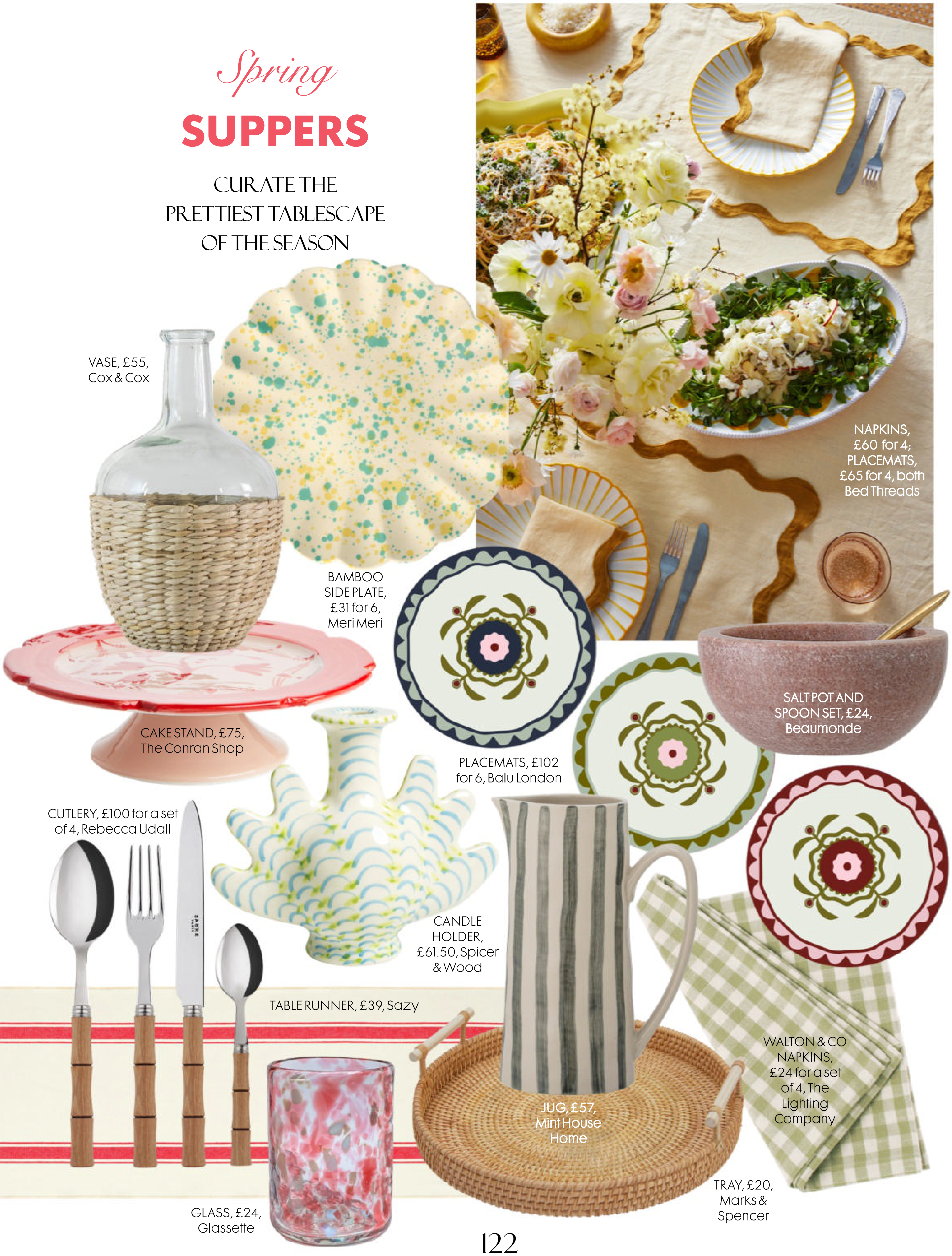
As the name suggests, Floradore is all about the joy of flowers. From its base in Falmouth, Cornwall, artist Lucy creates beautiful, vibrant printed goods and textiles that bloom with colour and pattern. The range includes greetings cards, contemporary wrapping-paper sets, Japanese furoshiki-inspired floral fabric wrappings and botanical artworks.

COUNTRYLIVINGSHOP.CO.UK/RED-MAY

> “Our new Marketplace brings our talented artisans together in one beautiful online store, so you can shop from them all year round from the comfort of your home” *Louise Pearce, editor-in-chief*

Spring SUPPERS

CURATE THE PRETTIEST TABLESCAPE OF THE SEASON



NAPKINS, £60 for 4; PLACEMATS, £65 for 4, both Bed Threads

VASE, £55, Cox & Cox

BAMBOO SIDE PLATE, £31 for 6, Meri Meri

SALT POT AND SPOON SET, £24, Beaumonde

CAKE STAND, £75, The Conran Shop

PLACEMATS, £102 for 6, Balu London

CUTLERY, £100 for a set of 4, Rebecca Udall

CANDLE HOLDER, £61.50, Spicer & Wood

TABLE RUNNER, £39, Sazy

JUG, £57, Mint House Home

WALTON & CO NAPKINS, £24 for a set of 4, The Lighting Company

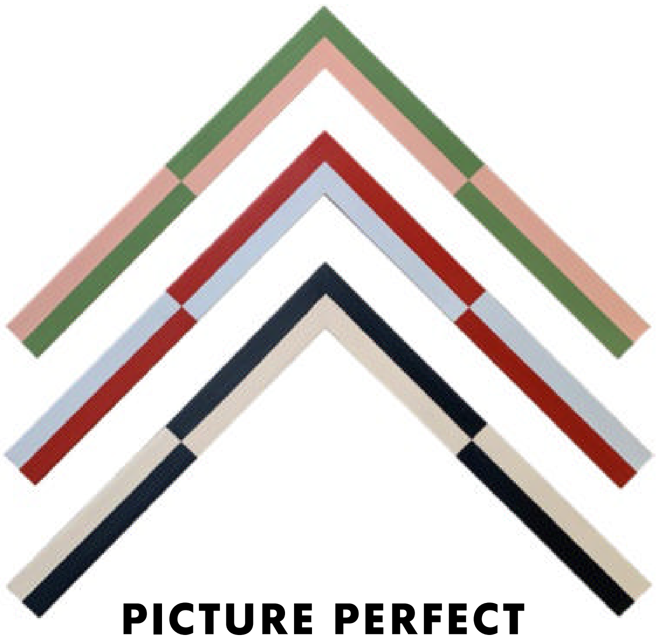
TRAY, £20, Marks & Spencer

GLASS, £24, Glassette

COMPILED BY: BECCA CULLUM-GREEN

THE LIVING INFLUENCER

RED INTERIORS EDITOR JAMES CUNNINGHAM ON THE THINGS HE LOVES THIS MONTH



PICTURE PERFECT

Patrick Ireland Frames has produced frames since the brand's founder learned his craft in Italy during the late 1970s. Latest in the line-up is the playful Chequered design, which can be painted in bespoke colours and made to specific dimensions.

FRAMES, to order,
Patrick Ireland Frames

ONE OF A KIND

Studio Arva, in London's Islington, is the new concept store from creative director Abisola Omole, where vintage furniture, tempting trinkets and handpicked design books make the space a treasure trove. The collection can be browsed online, too. Visit arva.co.uk.

SENSE OF PLACE

Daylesford Organic works with skilled artisans and expert craftspeople across the globe to create its beautiful collections. Its latest tabletop range includes plates made in South African's Western Cape and glassware produced in traditional Italian factories.

TABLEWARE, from £14 for a mug,
Daylesford Organic

TAKE THE LEAD

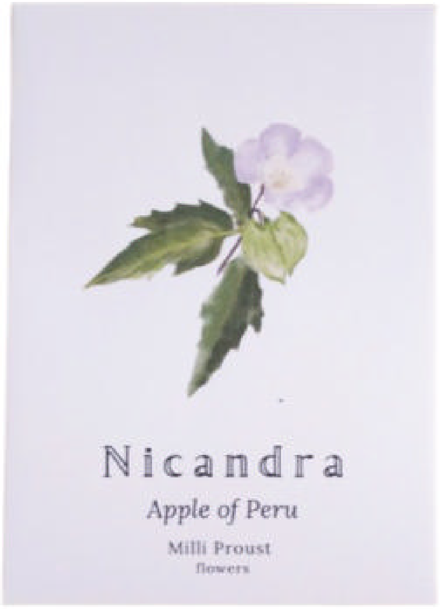
Extension cords are a necessity in today's always-on world, but the practical needn't exclude the pretty. Lola's Leads makes attractive examples in a rainbow of hues, which are handily available in a number of lengths and various socket capacities.

LEAD, from £35, Lola's Leads

IN BLOOM

Renowned for her charming bouquets and joyful arrangements, Milli Proust's pretty range of seeds allow us all to learn the craft from our own window box, balcony or garden.

SEEDS, from £2.90 a pack,
Milli Proust Flowers



PHOTOGRAPHY: MORGANE

BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL

Let Laura Ashley's joyful 70th Anniversary Collection lift your spirits – and liven up your living space

Have you joined the cottagecore club yet? This interiors trend is inspired by all things rural and rustic. Ruffles and ginghams abound, but the key to really tapping into this vibrant aesthetic is a showstopping floral, such as those in Laura Ashley's new homeware collection.

HERITAGE CHIC

This year marks the quintessentially British brand's 70th anniversary – a nostalgic milestone for those of us raised with its iconic prints. This latest launch mixes revived archive imagery with innovative illustrations that will make your home your happy place.

Take, for example, the Tulips print – a lively line-up of daffodils and tulips with a '90s gouache flair. Inspired by artwork found in the Laura Ashley archive, it's so wonderfully animated and textural, you can almost see the original brush strokes.

Meanwhile, the whimsical, line-drawn Gilly print is another standout, combining dahlias, daffodils and delphiniums for a stylised statement finish.

LAURA ASHLEY
70
YEARS

MODERN MAGIC

There's no fear of veering too far into twee territory here – this is a fun, fresh interpretation of cottagecore's more traditional sensibilities, evidenced in colour and textile choices alike. From rugs and wallpaper to cushions and bed linen, the palette spans punchy pinks, buttery yellows and dreamy sky blues, while crisp cottons sit comfortably next to rich pleated velvets. There's also a touch of contemporary typography in the form of the Joyful embroidered cushion.

Everything is designed to be mixed, matched and enthusiastically clashed for a more-is-more approach, but even a single piece promises to brighten your mood. And any homeware offering that brings with it some daily delight gets our seal of approval.

*Laura Ashley available at lauraashley.com and selected Next stores** LAURA ASHLEY
SINCE 1953

* Subject to availability. Delivery costs and restrictions apply

Mad ABOUT THE *house*

KATE WATSON-SMYTH INTERIORS EXPERT AND *RED* COLUMNIST HAS EXTENDED HER SPACE ON A BUDGET – WITH A GREENHOUSE

TREAT A GLASSHOUSE LIKE AN EXTRA ROOM AND USE IT AS A SPACE FOR ENTERTAINING AS WELL AS FOR YOUR PLANTS

It was a report in a Sunday newspaper that first caught my eye; greenhouses, it said, are the hot new venue for entertaining. And it went on to describe how people in glasshouses definitely should throw parties as they bring the ultimate indoor/outdoor vibe. The glass walls will perfectly reflect the light from myriad candles and you have the feeling of being out in the open with none of the winter chill.

Fashionable hotels such as The Pig, Soho Farmhouse and Daylesford House have all recently hung their chandeliers and dressed their tables for parties inspired by the rustic beauty of Petersham Nurseries. It sounded idyllic.

And then it was a more prosaic note on a council website that sealed the deal. Greenhouses, it noted, are classed as temporary structures and don't need planning permission. A plan was beginning to form.

Having recently moved house, I have been contemplating the layout of the new place. It has an extension on the back, that is soon to be rebranded as a pantry. I can't justify knocking it down to spend £100K moving it from the back to the side of the house when this won't actually gain any space.

And so the idea for a greenhouse began to take root. It would fill the narrow side return and be accessed via the new French doors in the kitchen. While not large enough for a party, it would provide the perfect morning coffee spot and possibly space for an intimate lunch for two. Heck, I might even grow a tomato or a few herbs.

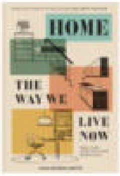
Then there's the cost. After a morning happily strolling round the corridors of Pinterest, I found the one I wanted at Dovetail Greenhouses and rang for a quote. It seems I'm not the only one to have stumbled across this idea; lead times were running at around 15 months, I was told, but they would happily come and survey the available space. I have booked a date and am awaiting the plans.

When the builder came to measure up for the kitchen doors I showed him the pictures.

'Guess how much?' I said triumphantly. He hesitated, stuck with the age-old dilemma of how what might seem affordable to one is beyond another's wildest dreams.

'It's around £7,000,' I crowed. He drew himself up to his full 6ft 7ins. 'That,' he said stiffly, 'seems like a lot for a greenhouse. I thought they were about 700 quid.'

Which just goes to show you that it really is all about your perception. You might think it's a very expensive greenhouse. From my end it's looking like a very cheap extension. Perhaps I will rebrand it as 'The Orangery'.



Home: The Way We Live Now (Pavilion) by Kate Watson-Smyth is out now on madaboutthehouse.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: LIVING4MEDIA/CECILIA MÖLLER

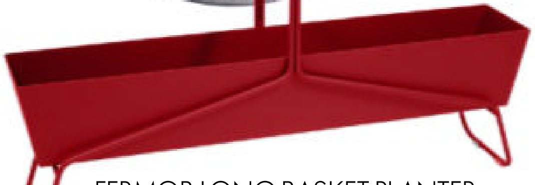
Five of the best... PLANTERS

TERRACOTTA POTS, from £22.99 each, Crocus Collection at Waitrose Garden

CERAMIC PLANTER, £45, Oliver Bonas

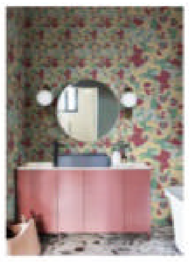
NKOMI BASKET, £65, Textured Lives

ZINC BARREL PLANTERS, £225 for a set of 2, Cox & Cox



FERMOB LONG BASKET PLANTER, £519, The Worm That Turned

DESIGN TIP



Current fashion is to create bathrooms and kitchens that look like rooms to live in rather than sleek fitted spaces. Using freestanding furniture and wall lights with fabric shades is part of the style. Adding wallpaper is another. If you have good ventilation, you can go to town on the decor. Make sure your paper is really well stuck at the edges and paint over with a coat of decorator's varnish to protect against splashes and stains. Otherwise, look for vinyl and waterproof papers. If money is no object try Wet System by Wall&Decò, which can even be used in the shower, and no grout lines.

WALL&DECÒ WET SYSTEM WALLPAPER AND SEALANTS IN MULTIPLE FLOWERS, £214 a m sq, West One Bathrooms

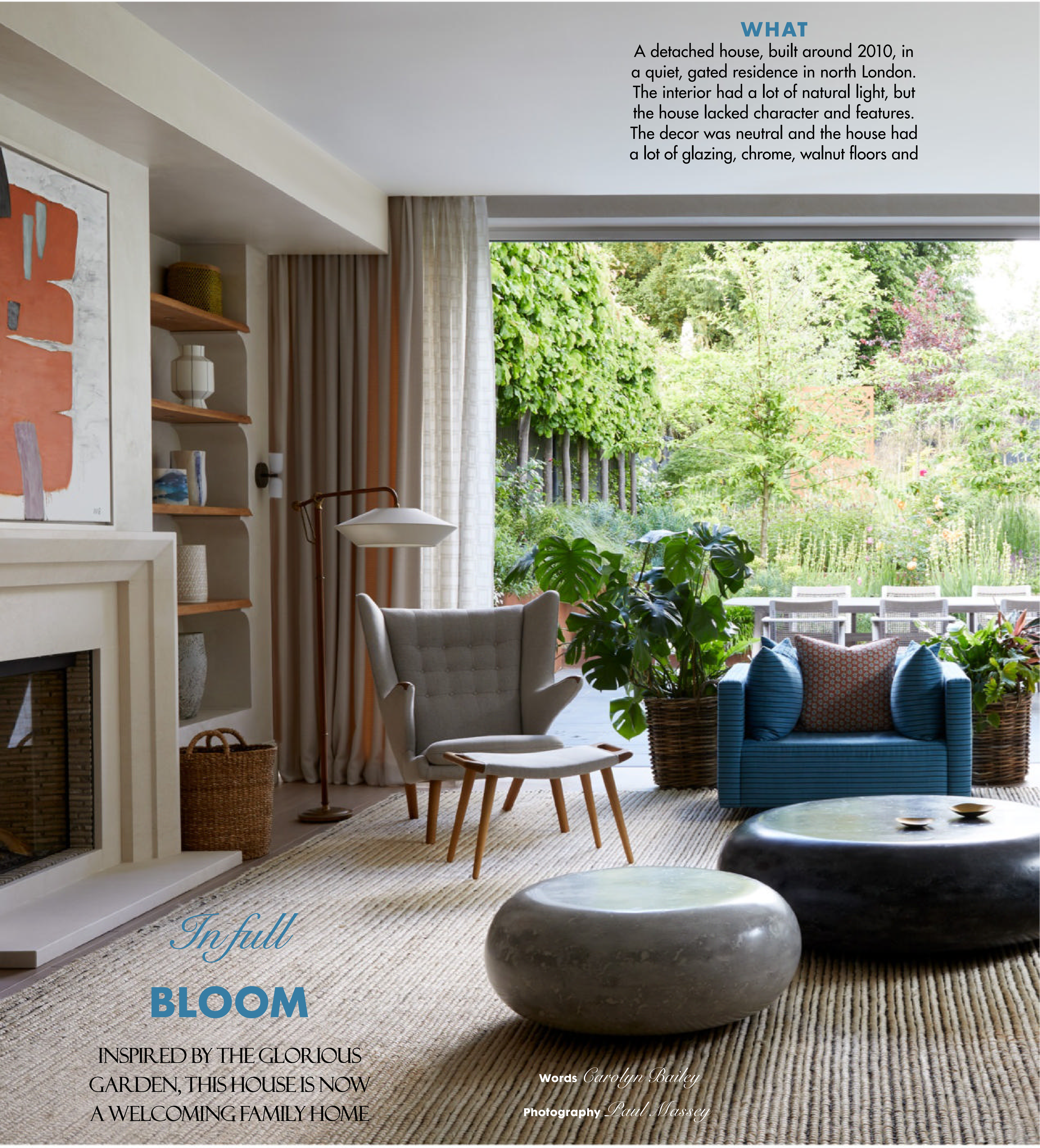
HOME CV

WHO

A Swedish couple and their three school-age children.

WHAT

A detached house, built around 2010, in a quiet, gated residence in north London. The interior had a lot of natural light, but the house lacked character and features. The decor was neutral and the house had a lot of glazing, chrome, walnut floors and



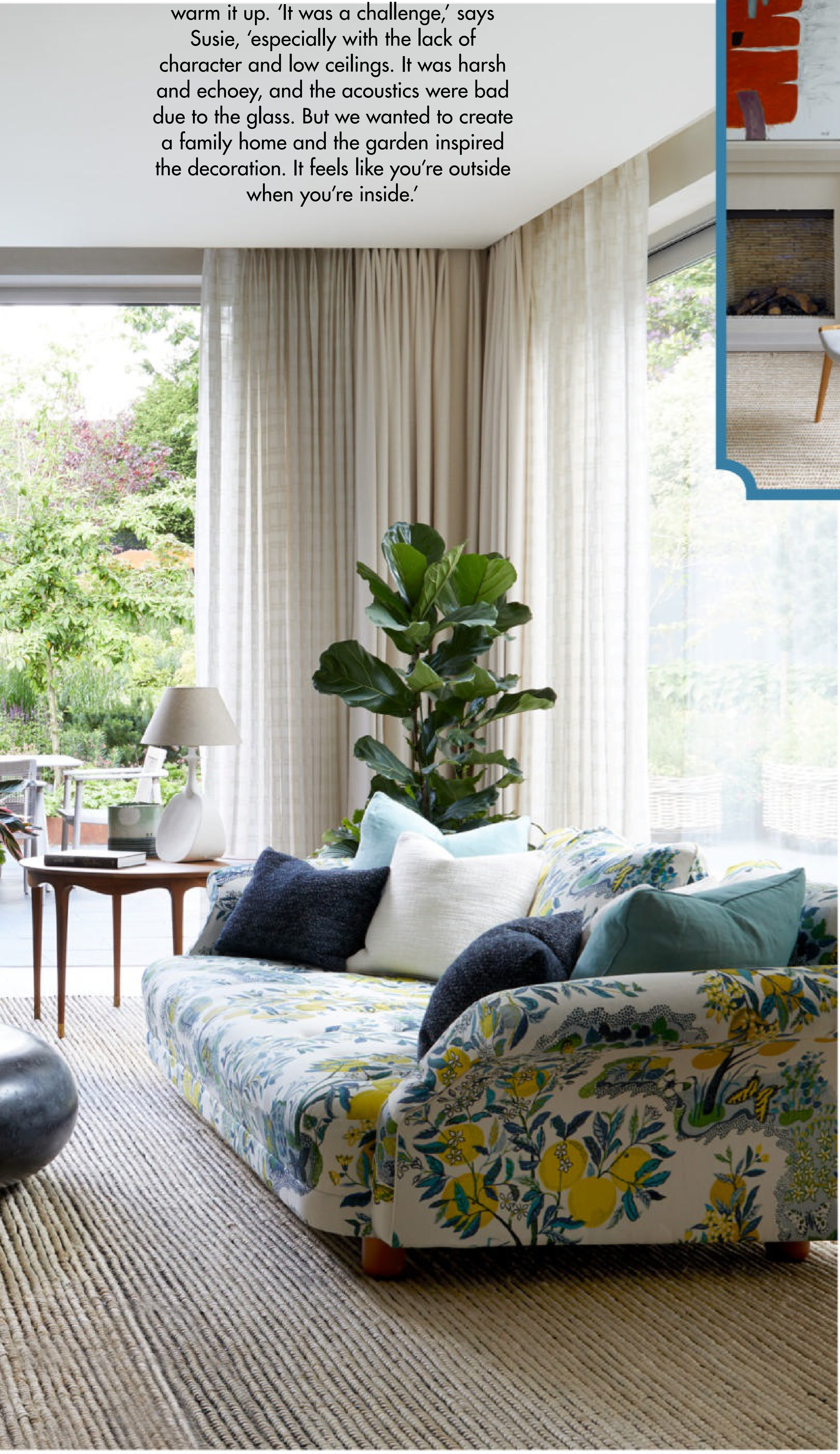
In full BLOOM

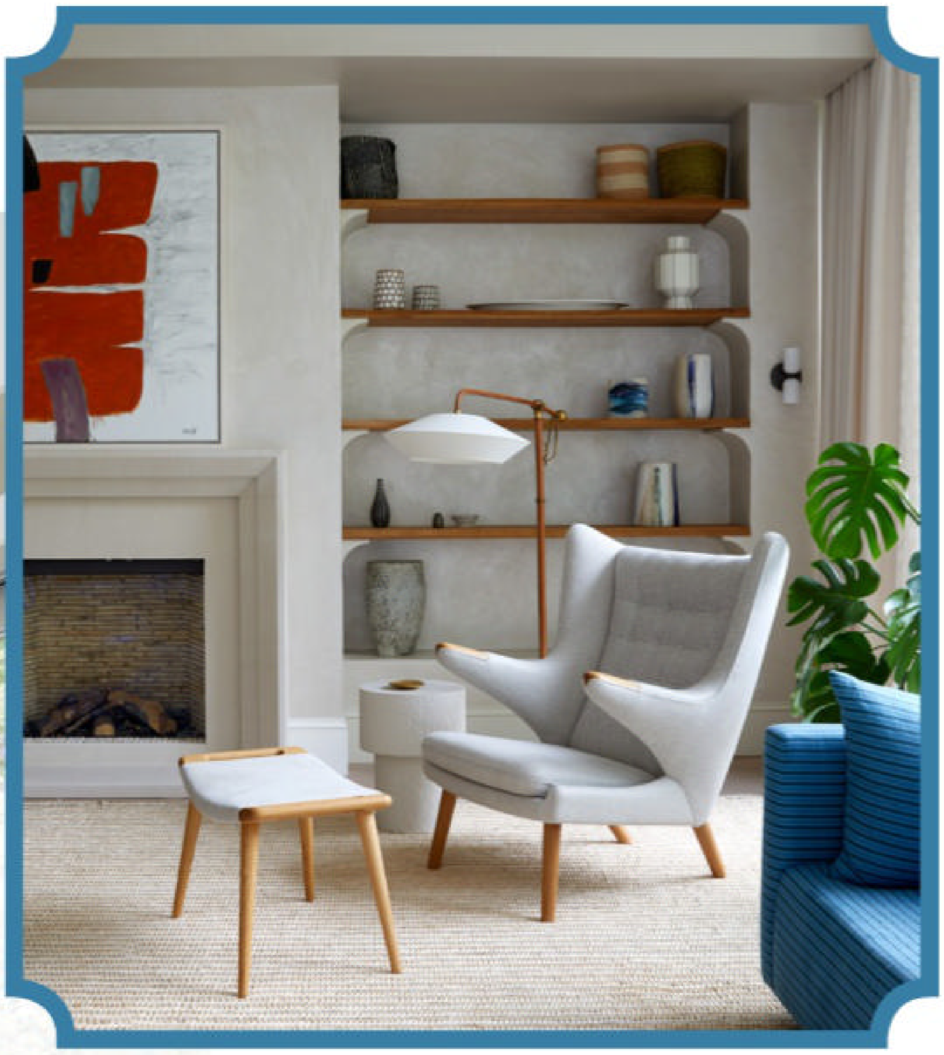
INSPIRED BY THE GLORIOUS GARDEN, THIS HOUSE IS NOW A WELCOMING FAMILY HOME

Words *Carolyn Bailey*

Photography *Paul Massey*

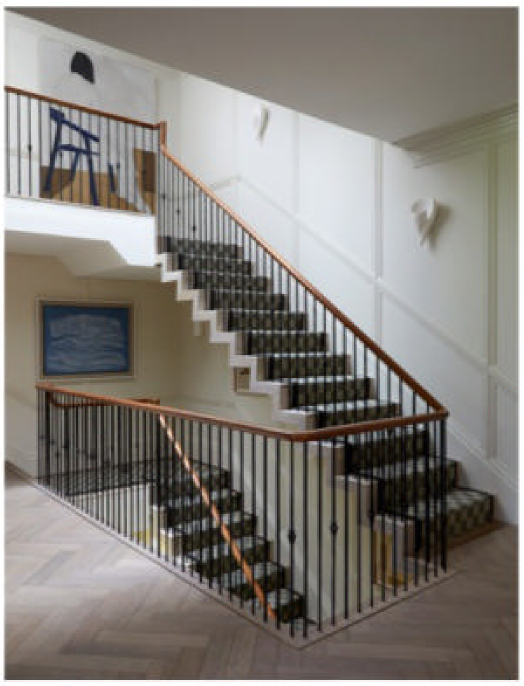
heaps of spotlights, making it feel harsh. The couple turned to Susie at Studio Atkinson (studio-atkinson.com) to help update the house and the brief was to warm it up. 'It was a challenge,' says Susie, 'especially with the lack of character and low ceilings. It was harsh and echoey, and the acoustics were bad due to the glass. But we wanted to create a family home and the garden inspired the decoration. It feels like you're outside when you're inside.'





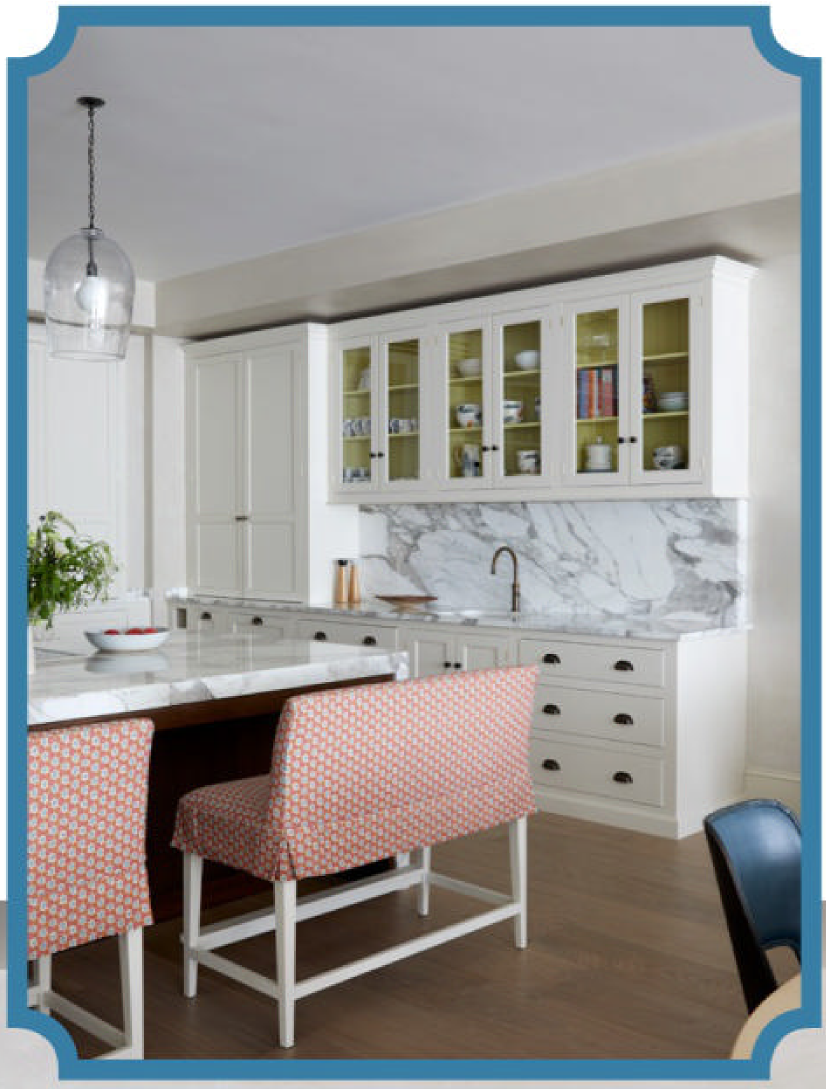
FAMILY ROOM

This area overlooks the garden. Centre stage is the huge, deep Svenskt Tenn sofa, re-covered in a Svenskt Tenn fabric. The couple love this piece as it's a nod to their homeland. The round pebble tables are from McCollin Bryan. 'We try to mix up shapes,' says Susie. The chair is strategically placed for reading, with a mid-century light, and the painting is by Michael Vaughan from the Jenna Burlingham Gallery.



HALLWAY

The biggest transformation in the house was the staircase – the new banister replaced sheets of glass. The wall lights from Hannah Woodhouse soften the overall look, as does the stair runner from Sinclair Till.

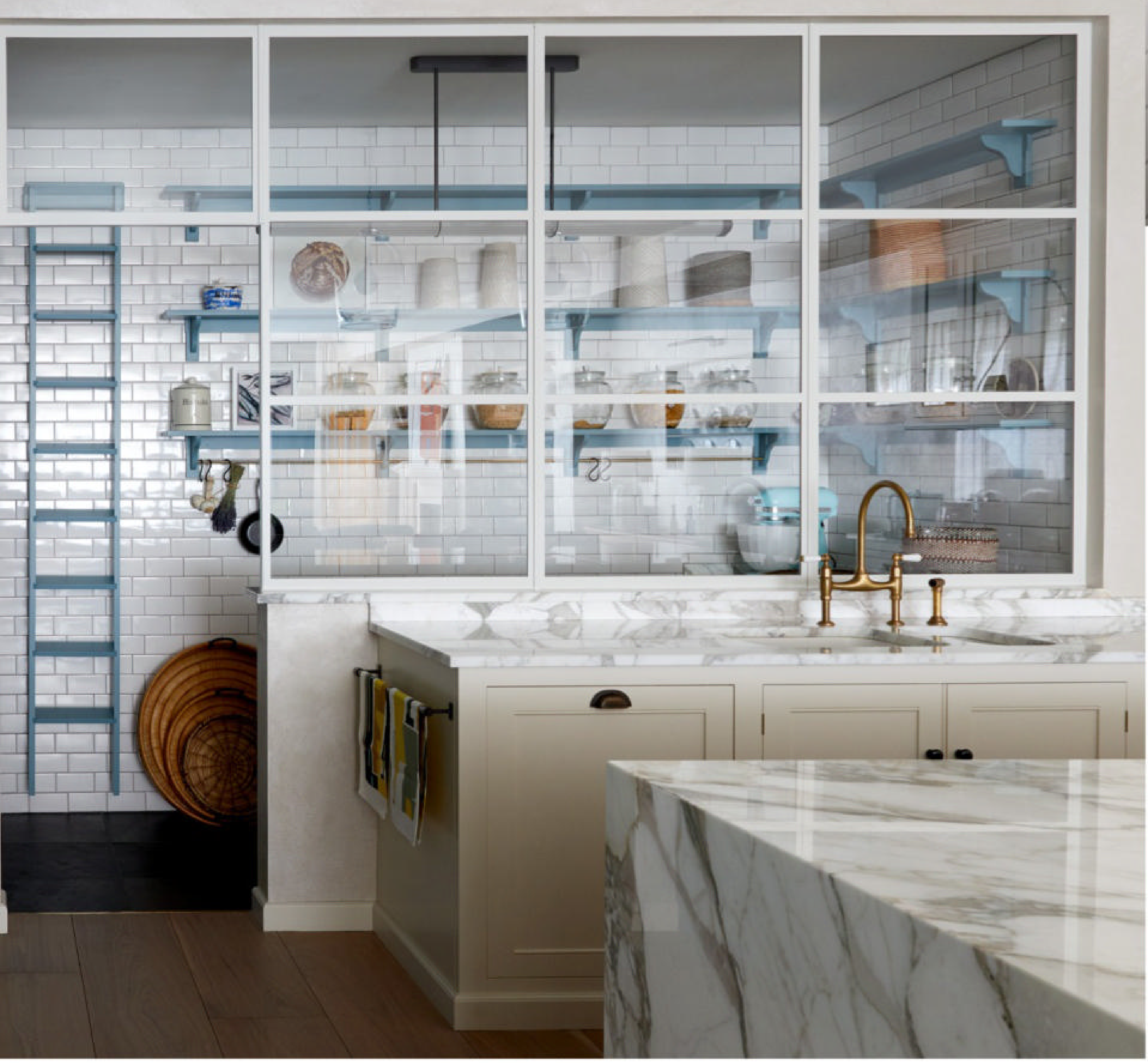


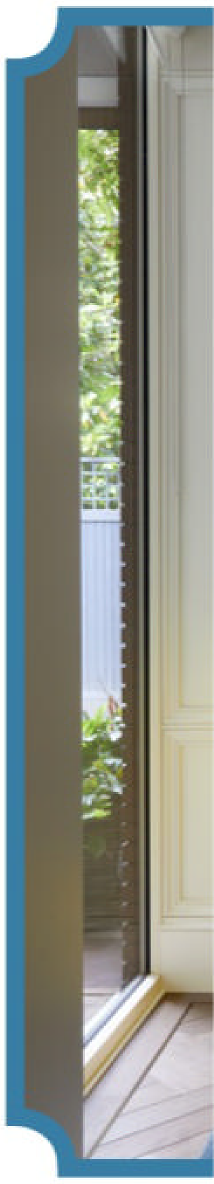
KITCHEN

The trickiest room to redesign was the open-plan area on the ground floor. ‘It felt so big,’ says Susie, ‘so we decided to subdivide and zone the space without adding new walls.’ The team designed a large marble island perfect for all the family, while practicalities were also taken into consideration – the benches, for instance, have slip covers so they can be removed and washed. The pendant light came from Rose Uniacke.

PANTRY

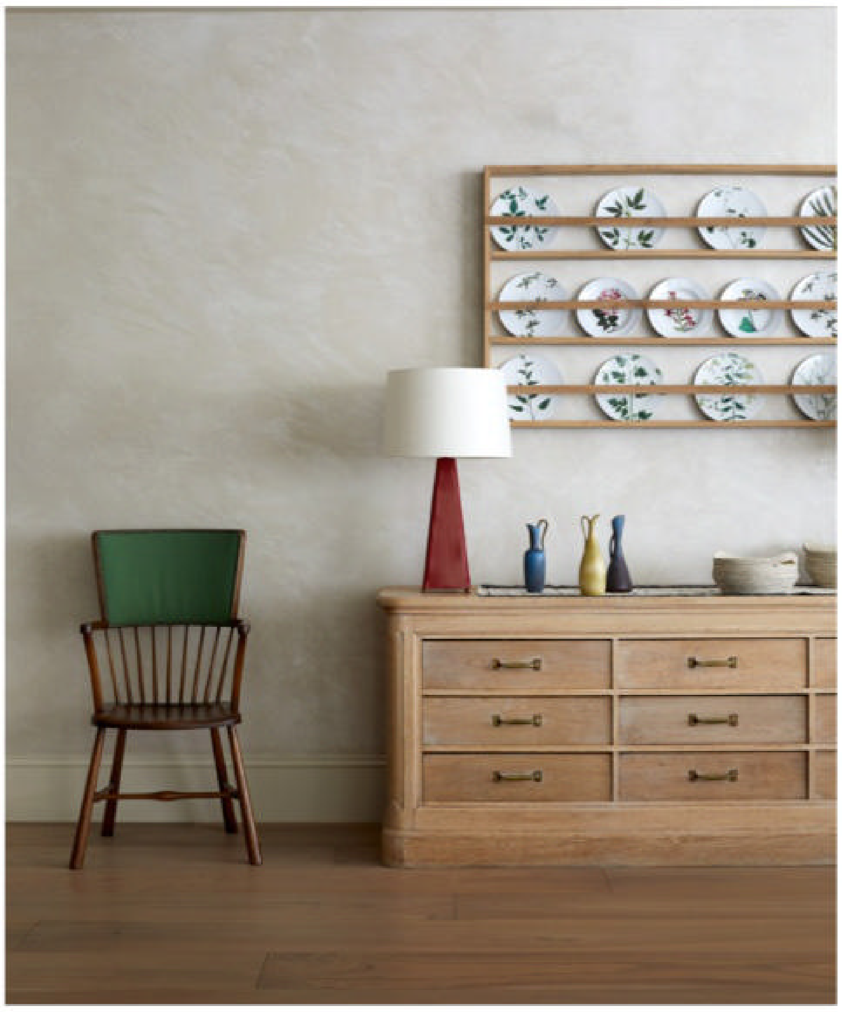
The pantry was formerly a closed-off cupboard. The wall was partially removed and glass installed. This room gave the designers the opportunity to bring colour and interest to the space. The units were custom made and painted in Farrow & Ball Oval Room Blue. The ladder also adds interest.





YELLOW CHAIR

‘It’s lovely to have a burst of yellow as you look down the hall’, says Susie. A mid-century chair, next to the desk in the hall, has been re-covered in yellow fabric, chosen as it’s near a window overlooking the garden. The light is vintage.

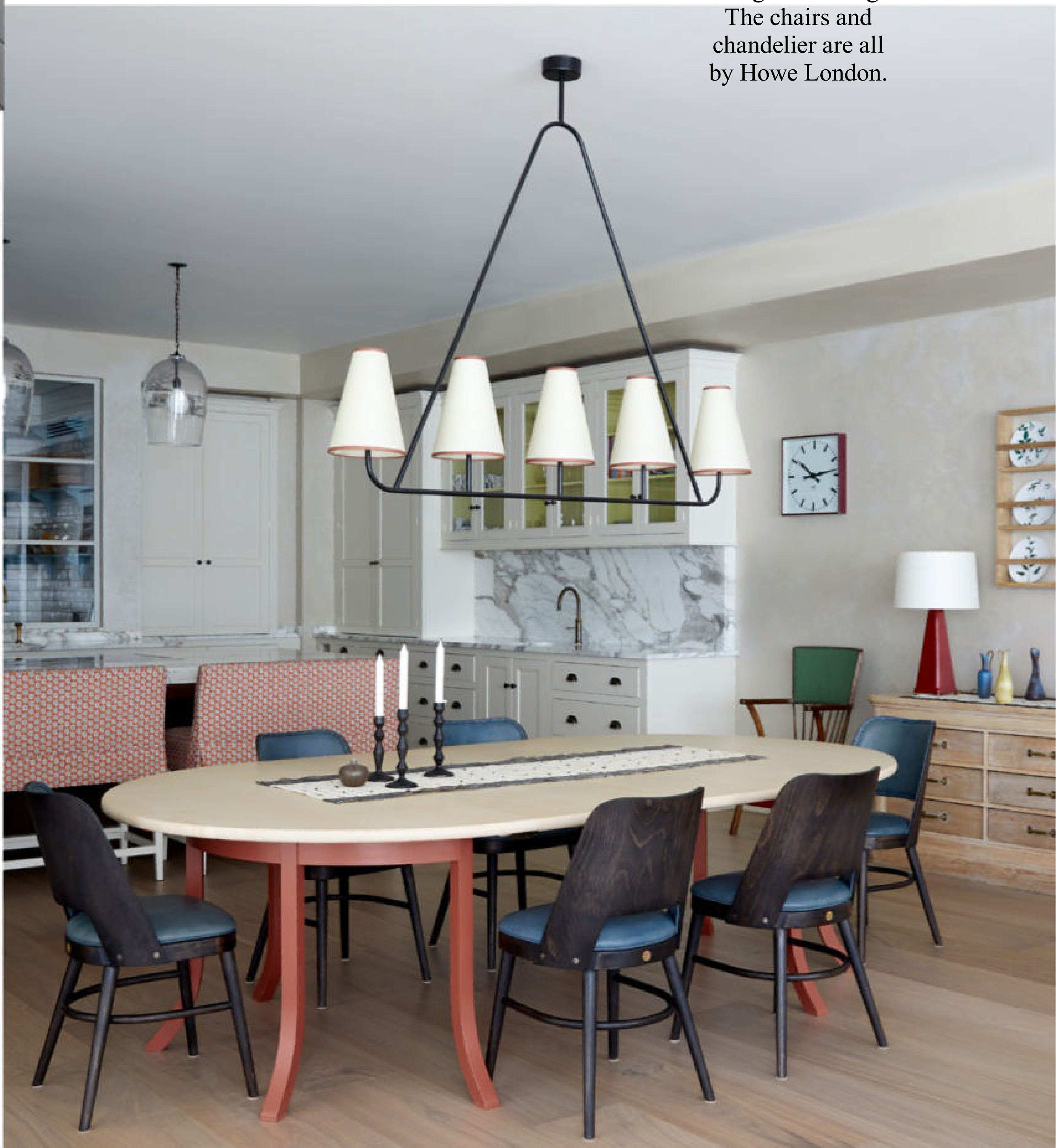


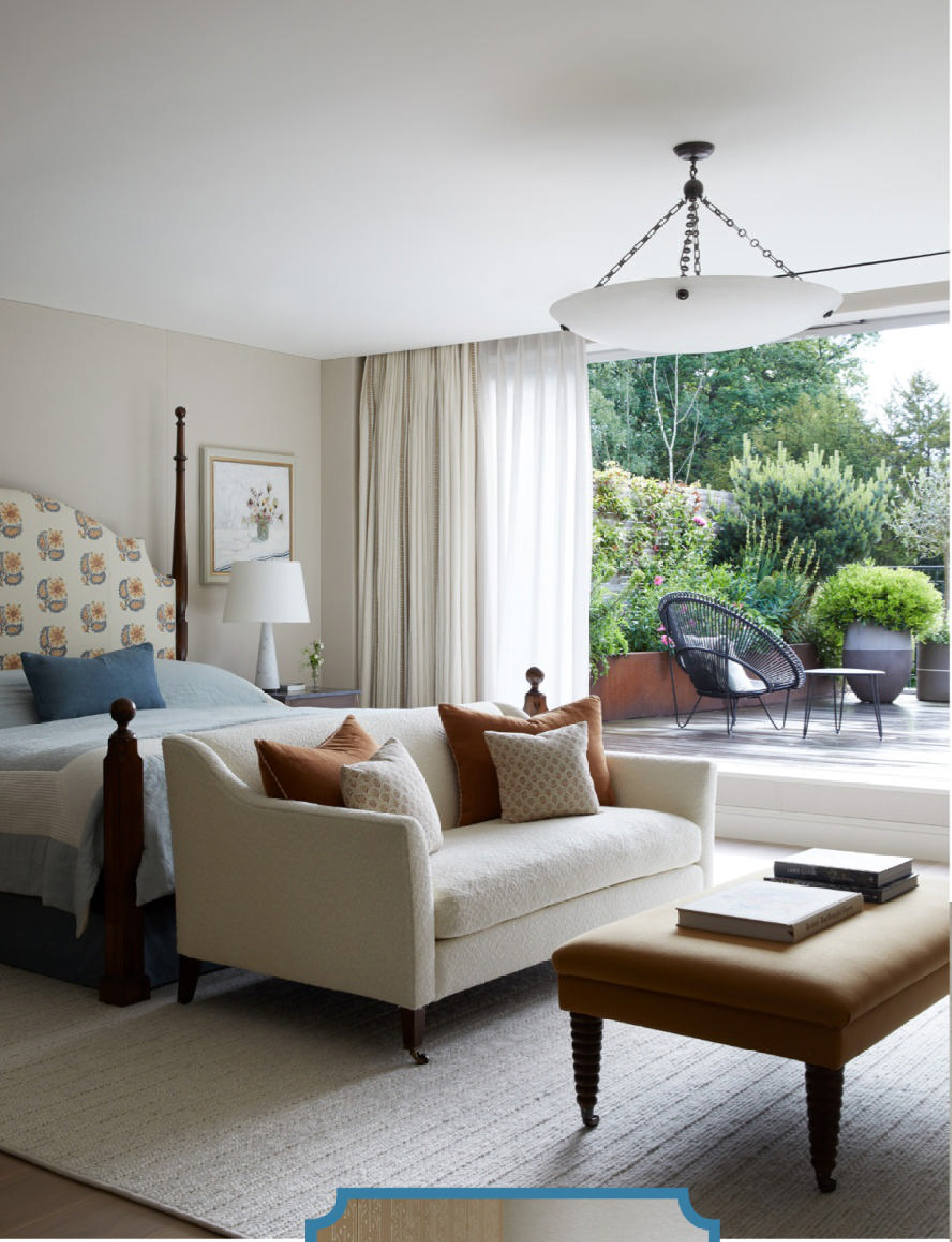
SIDEBOARD

The bleached wood floor runs throughout the dining room. The sideboard is a restored antique piece, and the plate rack above has been made to order. The chair is from Howe London.

DINING AREA

This area has a Scandi vibe, with a Max Rollitt table taking centre stage. The chairs and chandelier are all by Howe London.



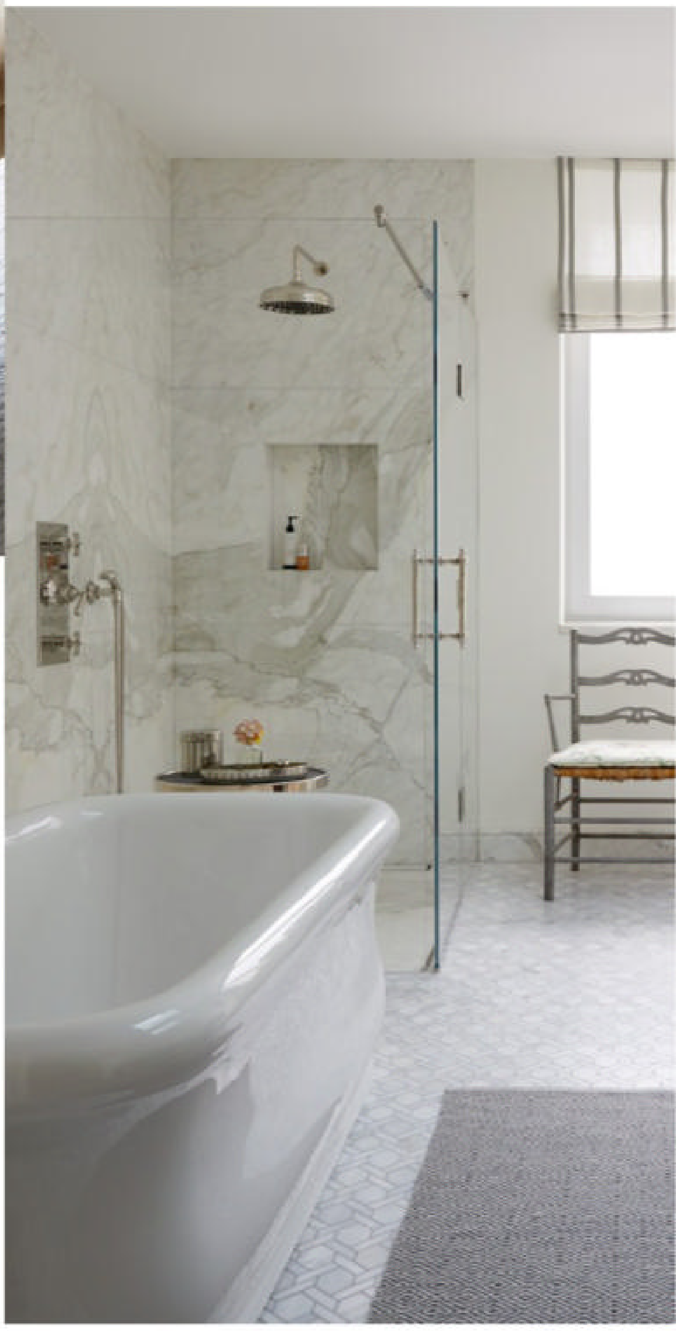


MAIN BEDROOM

The headboard in the main bedroom is covered in a Penny Morrison fabric, while a sofa, in Dedar fabric, sits at the foot of the bed.

BATHROOM

Very few adjustments were made in this room – the flooring and basins were not changed. A built-in bath was replaced with a standalone one from The Water Monopoly, a voile Roman blind from C&C Milano was added, and the antique chair was used to add charm.



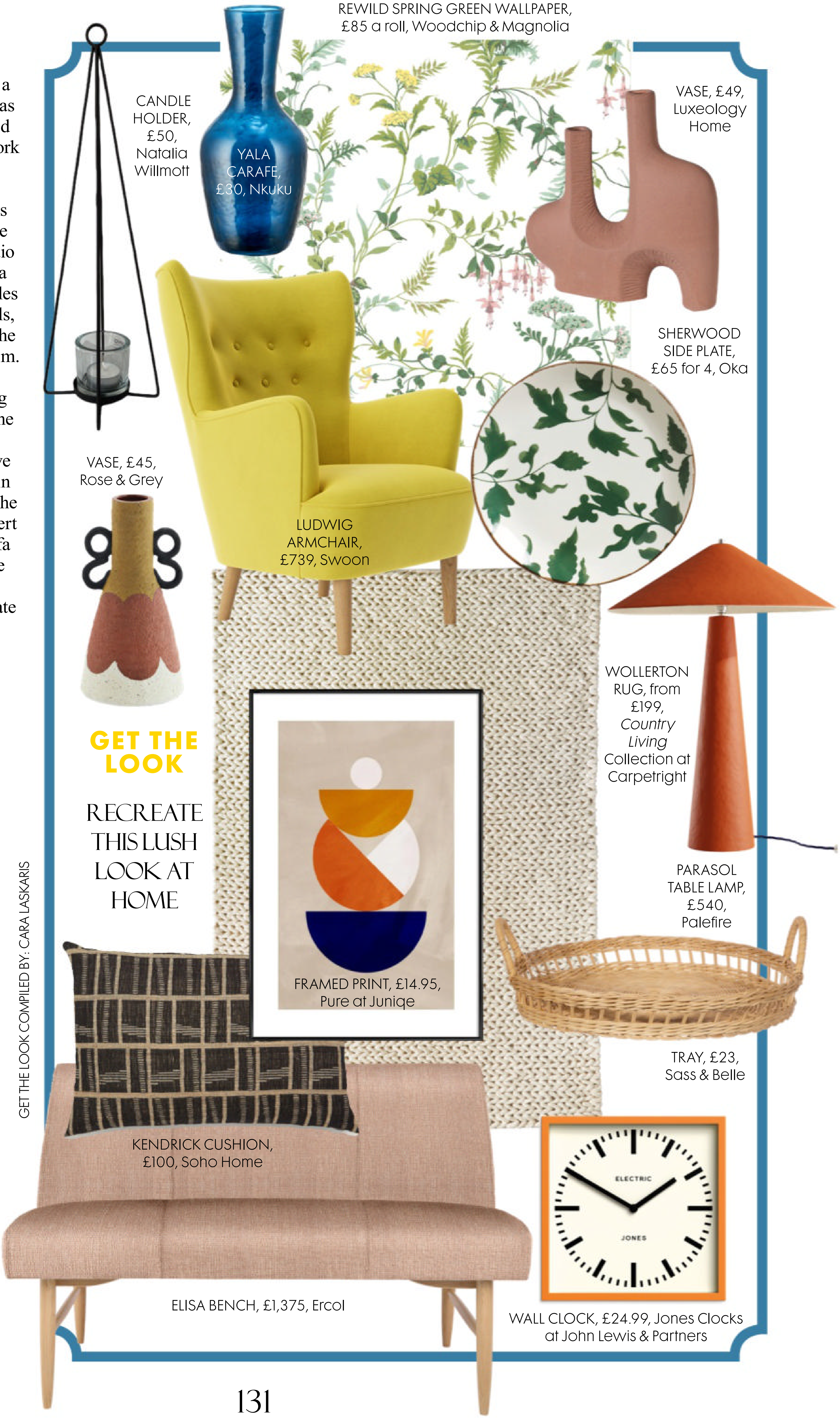
SNUG

One of the bedrooms has been turned into a snug-cum-study, as the couple wanted a quiet place to work and relax. The decoration was inspired by doors opening on to the roof terrace. Studio Atkinson chose a floral Raoul Textiles fabric for the walls, while the rest of the room was kept calm. ‘It feels like the garden is coming in,’ says Susie. The colours in the wallcovering have been picked out in the accessories. The table is from Robert Kime and the sofa and footstool are both by Studio Atkinson. The Kate Boxer painting blends in well.

GET THE LOOK

RECREATE THIS LUSH LOOK AT HOME

GET THE LOOK COMPILED BY: CARA LASKARIS



REWILD SPRING GREEN WALLPAPER, £85 a roll, Woodchip & Magnolia

CANDLE HOLDER, £50, Natalia Willmott

YALA CARAFE, £30, Nkuku

VASE, £49, Luxeology Home

SHERWOOD SIDE PLATE, £65 for 4, Oka

VASE, £45, Rose & Grey

LUDWIG ARMCHAIR, £739, Swoon

WOLLERTON RUG, from £199, *Country Living* Collection at Carpetright

PARASOL TABLE LAMP, £540, Palefire

FRAMED PRINT, £14.95, Pure at Juniqe

TRAY, £23, Sass & Belle

KENDRICK CUSHION, £100, Soho Home

ELISA BENCH, £1,375, Ercol

WALL CLOCK, £24.99, Jones Clocks at John Lewis & Partners

100th
anniversary
Good Housekeeping
TRIED • TESTED • TRUSTED

Carpeted with love

Make a great first impression with the Wentworth and Chartwell premium twist carpets from the *Good Housekeeping* collection at Carpetright

carpetright

See the full *Good Housekeeping* collection at carpetright.co.uk/brands/good-housekeeping

Good Housekeeping Chartwell Velvet Twist carpet in Suede

As you'd expect from a range bearing the *Good Housekeeping* name, every piece in this brand-new flooring collection has been expertly chosen not only for its superb quality and style but also for its incredible durability. The Chartwell and Wentworth twist carpets are no exception. Chartwell is an opulent, velvet-finish twist-pile carpet that's available in 12 shades, ranging from golden Honey to deep Royal Ink. Wentworth offers a short, dense twist pile with a textured feel and comes in 12 softly neutral to dramatically dark shades. It's also available as an extra-indulgent Elite variant, with a higher pile weight.

Both feel luxuriously soft underfoot but are hardwearing enough to lay in high-traffic areas such as the hall, lounge and stairs. They're also incredibly stain-resistant and colourfast, so you can be sure they will stay looking like new for longer.

Good Housekeeping Wentworth Twist carpet in Pearl

Good Housekeeping Wentworth Twist carpet in Pearl

Good Housekeeping Institute APPROVED 2022

Good Housekeeping

Spice ROAD

FOOD WRITER SARAH WOODS EXPLORES THE DIVERSE COMMUNITIES FROM THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT THAT HAVE MADE BRITAIN THEIR HOME, BRINGING THEIR HERITAGE AND RECIPES WITH THEM

Recipes *Sarah Woods*
Photography *Liz & Max Haarala Hamilton*

London & Harrow – Sri Lankan

London has the largest Sri Lankan community in the UK, settled there since the 1960s. Sri Lankan food culture is often described as pan-Asian and has a number of influences from South India, Malaysia, Indonesia and China.

Jaffna coconut prawns with firecracker mayo

Jaffna curry powder takes its name from the city of Jaffna, located near the northern tip of the island. It has a hotter, deeper flavour than the roasted curry powder that's used in so many Sri Lankan dishes, the rich colour owing much to the ratio of red chillies in the blend. Jaffna curry powder is used in meat, seafood and vegetarian dishes, and brings a distinct intense flavour.

SERVES 4 as a starter
(5 prawns each)

FOR THE FIRECRACKER MAYO
- **150g premium mayonnaise**
- **1tsp white wine vinegar**
- **¼tsp paprika**
- **¼tsp cayenne pepper**
- **¼tsp ground cumin**
- **¼tsp ground coriander**
- **Pinch dried chilli flakes**
- **1tbsp hot sauce**
- **½ garlic clove, grated**
- **1tsp chopped coriander leaves**
- **Squeeze of lime juice**

FOR THE COCONUT PRAWNS
- **Vegetable oil, for frying**
- **2tbsp cornflour**
- **1tbsp rice flour**
- **1tsp Jaffna curry powder (buy online or at an Indian grocer)**
- **2 egg whites**
- **75g unsweetened desiccated coconut**
- **20 raw, peeled but tail on, de-veined king prawns (about 400g)**

TO GARNISH
- **1-2 sprigs fresh curry leaves**
- **50ml vegetable oil**
- **Lime wedges**

1 Whizz all mayo ingredients in a blender, make any seasoning adjustments, and ta-da, it's ready. Decant into a bowl or airtight container and chill.

2 You can either deep-fry or shallow-fry the prawns – it's up to you. You do need to have the oil at the correct temperature, however – 160°C – as the coconut can easily burn.

3 Shallow-fry the curry leaves for the garnish in the vegetable oil on low-medium heat. The leaves need to have had time to dry out, or they will really spit. They will turn the brightest green in about 30sec. Remove from the oil and place on kitchen paper. They will crisp as they cool. You can reuse this oil.

4 Mix both flours, curry powder and ½tsp salt in a mixing bowl – use a whisk.

5 In a second bowl, whisk the egg whites until frothy. Finally, put the desiccated coconut into a third bowl.

6 I like to keep the tails on the prawns when it comes to finger food as not only does it look pretty, but from a practical point of view, it makes it easier to pick them up. Dip prawns first in the seasoned flour, then in egg white, then in coconut and fry until cooked, crisp and golden. Remove from the oil and place on kitchen paper. Serve immediately with the mayo, crispy curry leaves, lime wedges and an ice-cold IPA or cocktail.

Join Woods on her quest to explore amazing British and South Asian fusion dishes from all over the world

Cook's note

You can use strips of white fish and make goujons if you prefer, or use chicken or a plant-based meat alternative. Simply adjust the cooking time accordingly.

Black Country and Birmingham – Punjabi

Punjabi cooking is renowned for its big and gutsy flavours laden with butter and dairy. Punjab is also known as the birthplace of tandoori-style cooking. The food is generous to its core and adapts very well to the British palate.

Green chicken tikka with black rice salad

I love the riot of colour in this salad! The black backdrop of the rice is a dramatic canvas for the vibrant green of the tikka and herbs, ruby pomegranate seeds, rouge peppers and golden sweetcorn.

SERVES 2
(with leftover tikka for wraps)

- **Vegetable oil, a few generous glugs**

FOR THE GREEN/HARIYALI MARINADE

- **30g coriander leaves**
- **15g mint leaves**
- **50g young leaf spinach**
- **10g ginger, grated**
- **10g garlic, grated**
- **1-2tsp minced finger chillies, or to taste**
- **Juice 1 lime**
- **250g Greek yogurt**
- **1½tsp garam masala**
- **1tsp ground cumin**
- **1 level tsp ground turmeric**
- **6-7 skinless boneless chicken thighs**

FOR THE RICE SALAD

- **1 large red pepper**
- **1 red onion**
- **Cumin seeds, to sprinkle**
- **1 sweetcorn cob**
- **250g cooked black rice (buy precooked pouches)**
- **2-3 charred baby leeks, optional (lightly spray with oil and char on a griddle pan)**

FOR THE DRESSING

- **3tbsp vegetable oil**
- **Finely grated zest and juice 1 lime**
- **1 small garlic clove, or to taste, grated**
- **1tsp ground cumin**
- **½tsp ground coriander**
- **½tsp light brown sugar**
- **½tsp Kashmiri chilli powder**
- **½tsp chilli flakes**
- **1tsp chopped fresh coriander**
- **½tsp pomegranate molasses**

TO GARNISH

- **Fresh coriander and mint leaves, or micro-herbs**
- **Finely sliced red chillies**
- **65g pomegranate seeds**
- **Finely sliced spring onions**
- **Charred lime wedges**

1 Start with the marinade. Blitz coriander, mint, spinach, ginger, garlic, chillies and lime juice in a blender with a few generous glugs of oil – enough to make a thick paste.

2 Put yogurt into a large mixing bowl and stir in the green paste. Mix in the garam masala, ground cumin, turmeric and 1½tsp salt. Taste – you want some chilli heat and it should be well seasoned. Adjust accordingly and set aside.

3 Cut chicken into chunky bite-sized pieces, place in the marinade, cover and chill, ideally overnight or for at least 2-3hr.

4 Preheat oven to 200°C fan. For the rice salad, cut pepper and red onion into 2cm chunks, coat sparsely with oil, season with salt and a sprinkle of cumin seeds and roast until slightly charred at the edges – about 20-25min. Cook sweetcorn under a very hot grill until golden all over with a hint of a char. Hold the corn upright and slice off the kernels. Discard core.

5 Whisk all the dressing ingredients together in a small bowl with a pinch of salt; set aside.

6 When you are ready to bring the dish together, cook the chicken under a grill on the highest setting to recreate that fierce tandoori heat; you want a little char without burning.

7 Cook or heat your rice – I use a shop-bought microwaveable pouch for convenience, but follow the packet instructions if cooking your own. Toss rice and vegetables (including the charred leeks, if using) with the dressing in a large bowl.

8 Serve your sizzling green chicken tikka on top of the rice salad, adorned with the various garnishes. Divine!

Cook's note

You can make this dish vegetarian by replacing the chicken with paneer, halloumi or tofu.

Bradford & Yorkshire – Kashmiri

There is a big Kashmiri community in Bradford, the majority of whom came from the Azad Kashmir region and practise the Muslim faith. Kashmiri food is heavily meat-oriented and originates from the foothills of the Himalayas, reflecting its diverse cultural history as a strategic stop along the Silk Route.

Spiced lamb shanks with shalgam (turnip)

The humble turnip is often overlooked in favour of its racier root veg cousins – parsnips and carrots. However, the slow cooking yields a delicious sweetness, and paired with lamb, spice and heat, it's a bewitching combination. The slow-cooked meat on the bone adds a full-bodied depth of flavour and teasing out the meltingly soft bone marrow is utterly irresistible! The Kashmiri basar masala really sets this dish apart.

SERVES 4

- **4 lamb shanks**
- **2 bay leaves**
- **2 black cardamom pods**
- **3 whole cloves**
- **5 whole peppercorns**
- **5cm cassia bark**
- **Vegetable oil, to cook**
- **2 brown onions, finely sliced into ½-moons**
- **30g ginger, grated**
- **30g garlic, grated**
- **1-2 bird's-eye chillies, split in ½ lengthways**
- **1tsp ground turmeric**
- **1½tsp basar masala (buy online or at an Indian grocer)**
- **2 x 400g tins chopped tomatoes, blitzed to a purée**
- **2 heaped tbsp Greek yogurt**
- **2 small turnips, peeled and cut into chunky dice**
- **Pinch kasuri methi (dried fenugreek)**
- **1tbsp chopped fresh coriander**

1 Put the shanks into a large pan and cover with water. Add the bay leaves, black cardamom, cloves, peppercorns and cassia. Bring to the boil, then simmer the meat for 30-45min. Remove the lamb shanks and set aside. Don't discard the cooking liquid, as you may need it later.
2 Meanwhile, make the masala. In a separate pan, heat a few tbsp oil on medium-high heat. Tip in the sliced onions, reduce heat to medium and cook for about 10min until softened. Add the ginger, garlic and chillies.
3 After 10min, add the turmeric, basar masala and 2tsp salt (or to taste). Toast for 30sec, adding a splash of water if the pan becomes too dry so the spices don't stick and burn, then pour in the tomatoes. Increase heat and bring to a simmer. Allow to cook for 5-10min. When you see the oil separate on the surface, that means it's cooked and ready to taste. Check seasoning. If it needs more chillies, add them now, along with the yogurt, mixing well. Remove from heat until the lamb is ready.
4 Gently place the partly cooked lamb shanks in the masala and stir together, coating all the pieces. You may want to add a splash of water – use the cooking stock from the shanks – but beware of adding too much as the meat will shrink and will also release liquid during cooking. (If you do add too much water, you can correct at the end by simmering, uncovered, to reduce.)
5 Bring to the boil, then reduce heat to a simmer; cover with a cartouche and lid. Cook low and slow for 1½hr. After this point, mix in the diced turnips and a pinch of methi (you may need to add more water – use the lamb cooking stock). Simmer for an additional 30min, or until the meat is meltingly soft and unctuous and the turnips are cooked through.
6 Finally, scatter over chopped coriander leaves and any other garnish you like. Serve with freshly cooked chapattis or rice if you prefer.

Swindon – Goan

Swindon has a significant Goan population, many of whom arrived in the early 2000s via Portuguese passports. Goan food culture is influenced heavily by Goa's colonial history, a blend of vibrant southern Indian influences and European preservation techniques, and is heavily seafood-based because of being coastal.

Mackerel racheado fry

Racheado is a classic spicy wet masala paste with a vibrant red colour as a result of dried Kashmiri chillies. Goans love to smother and fill fish with this masala before shallow-frying. You need a robust fish to stand up to this gutsy masala, and it's mackerel that springs to mind.

SERVES 2

- **2 butterflied mackerel fillets, tail on (400g combined weight)**
- **3-4tbsp vegetable oil**
- **Lemon or lime wedges, to serve**

FOR THE RACHEADO PASTE

- **1tsp cumin seeds**
- **1tsp black peppercorns**
- **5 whole cloves**
- **3tsp Kashmiri chilli powder**
- **½tsp ground turmeric**
- **10g ginger, grated**
- **10g garlic, grated**
- **1tsp tamarind paste**
- **½tsp caster sugar or jaggery**
- **3tbsp white wine vinegar**

1 For the paste, toast the cumin seeds, peppercorns and cloves in a dry frying pan, then grind with a pestle and mortar to a powder, with 1tsp salt.

2 In a mixing bowl, mix the chilli powder, turmeric, ginger, garlic, tamarind, sugar or jaggery and vinegar into a thick paste.

3 Generously smother each mackerel fillet with the paste, front and back. You won't need it all, so keep what's left over in an airtight container in the fridge.

4 Heat 3-4tbsp vegetable oil in a large frying pan on medium-high heat and fry the mackerel for about 3min on each side, or until cooked through, being careful not to burn the spice paste. Serve with rice, stir-fried Tenderstem broccoli and wedges of lime.

Glasgow – Pakistani

Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland by population, and the most ethnically diverse. This cultural melting pot offers us a very exciting food scene, and the coming together of the region's fantastic natural produce with cooking techniques from different cultures lends itself to a delicious culinary evolution.

Loaded baingan bhurtha (smoked aubergine)

I've reimagined the bhurtha here, serving it as a dip on a layer of labneh flecked with curry oil and pomegranate molasses. You need a gas hob for this dish – if you don't have one, you can use the activated charcoal method to infuse the smoke: put a white hot piece of charcoal into a small dish, drizzle a tbsp of ghee on to the charcoal, which will cause it to smoke, then place this smoking dish in the cooked bhurtha pan and pop the lid to trap the smoke. You can smoke meat dishes this way too. It's delicious!

SERVES 4-6 as a starter

- **3 large aubergines**
- **Vegetable oil, for roasting and frying**
- **1tsp cumin seeds, plus extra for roasting**
- **1 star anise**
- **1 large brown onion (or 2 small ones), finely sliced into ½-moons**
- **2 green chillies, split in ½ lengthways**
- **7g ginger, grated**
- **7g garlic, grated**
- **½tsp ground turmeric**
- **1tsp garam masala**
- **150ml passata**
- **1tsp tomato purée**

TO GARNISH

- **Labneh (or thick Greek yogurt)**
- **Finely diced red onion**
- **Dill fronds**
- **Pomegranate seeds**
- **Curry oil, see Cook's note**
- **Pomegranate molasses**

1 Set your oven to 200°C fan.

2 Start by prepping the aubergines. Fire up the 2 largest rings on your gas hob (see intro) on maximum flames. Use the largest aubergine for presentation – put that to one side. Place the other 2 aubergines directly on the flames.

3 Back to the presentation aubergine: cut this in ½ from top to bottom. Dice one ½ into chunky 2.5cm pieces. Lightly score the other ½ around the entire perimeter, about ½cm from the edge, then score the middle in a criss-cross; don't pierce the outer skin. This will make it easy to scoop out the flesh once roasted.

4 Keep an eye on the flaming aubergines. You want them to burn and char. Use tongs to turn them and ensure each side is charred.

5 Place the diced aubergine in a large mixing bowl, toss with a couple tbsp vegetable oil and season with salt and a sprinkle of cumin seeds. Gently massage the scored aubergine ½ all over with a scant amount of oil. Place it cut-side up on a lined baking sheet and season with a little salt. Place the diced aubergine alongside it.

6 Your charred aubergines will be ready by now, too. Lift on to a separate lined baking sheet. Roast all the aubergines for 20min, or until they are very soft when squeezed. The aubergine ½ and dice may need an extra 5min. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

7 Meanwhile, make the masala. Heat 3-4tbsp vegetable oil in a medium-large pan on medium-high heat. Add the 1tsp cumin seeds and star anise and when they start to release their aromas, tip in the onion and chillies and reduce heat. Cook onion low and slow for 15-20min to lightly caramelise. Add the ginger and garlic and cook out for a couple min.

8 The aubergines should be ready to scoop out by now. First, the presentation ½: using a spoon, gently scoop out the flesh, being careful not to break the skin, and set aside. Next, cut the charred aubergines in ½ from top to bottom and gently spoon that flesh out, too, discarding the charred exterior. Roughly dice the flesh, then place in a bowl and set aside.

9 Once the onions have caramelised, add the turmeric, garam masala and 1tsp salt. Toast for 30sec, then add the passata and tomato purée. Increase heat and bring to the boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 7-8min. When the oil has separated on the surface, have a taste and adjust seasoning.

10 Stir in the aubergine flesh and the diced pieces and simmer for 5-10min. This is a baingan bhurtha, which you can eat with chapattis.

11 Smother your serving plate with a thin layer of labneh or Greek yogurt. Place the empty presentation aubergine ½ on top – we're using this as a serving vessel – and load it up with the hot bhurtha. Garnish with finely diced red onion, dill and pomegranate seeds. Drizzle with curry oil and pomegranate molasses and tuck in with toasted sourdough, naan or crispy lavash flatbread.

Cook's note

To make curry oil, sweat 2-3 echalion shallots and 10g finely sliced garlic in 4tbsp oil with some salt, for 5min. Add 9tsp mild curry powder; toast for 10-15sec. Add 300ml vegetable oil; gently warm. Remove from heat and infuse for 1hr. Add salt and lemon juice to taste. Strain through muslin. Store in a squeezy bottle until needed.

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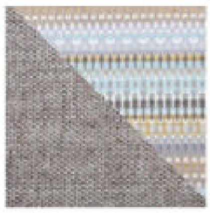
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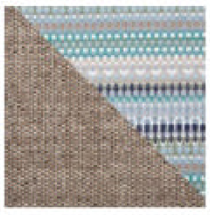
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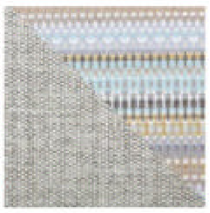
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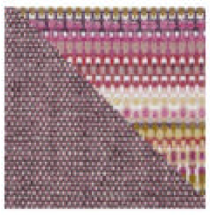
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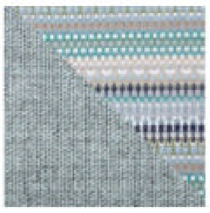
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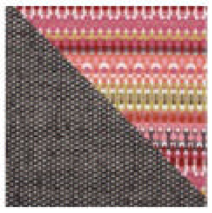
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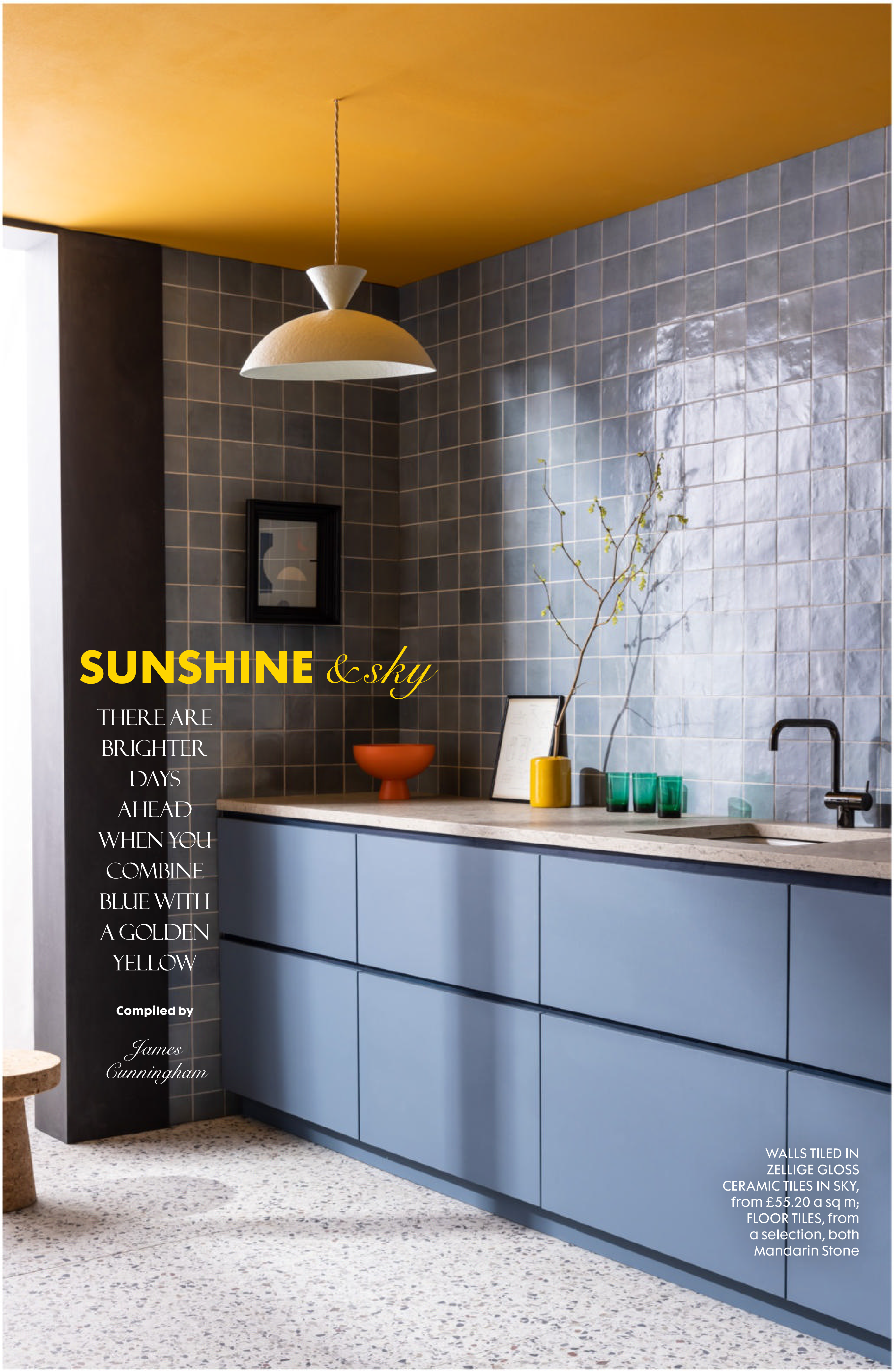

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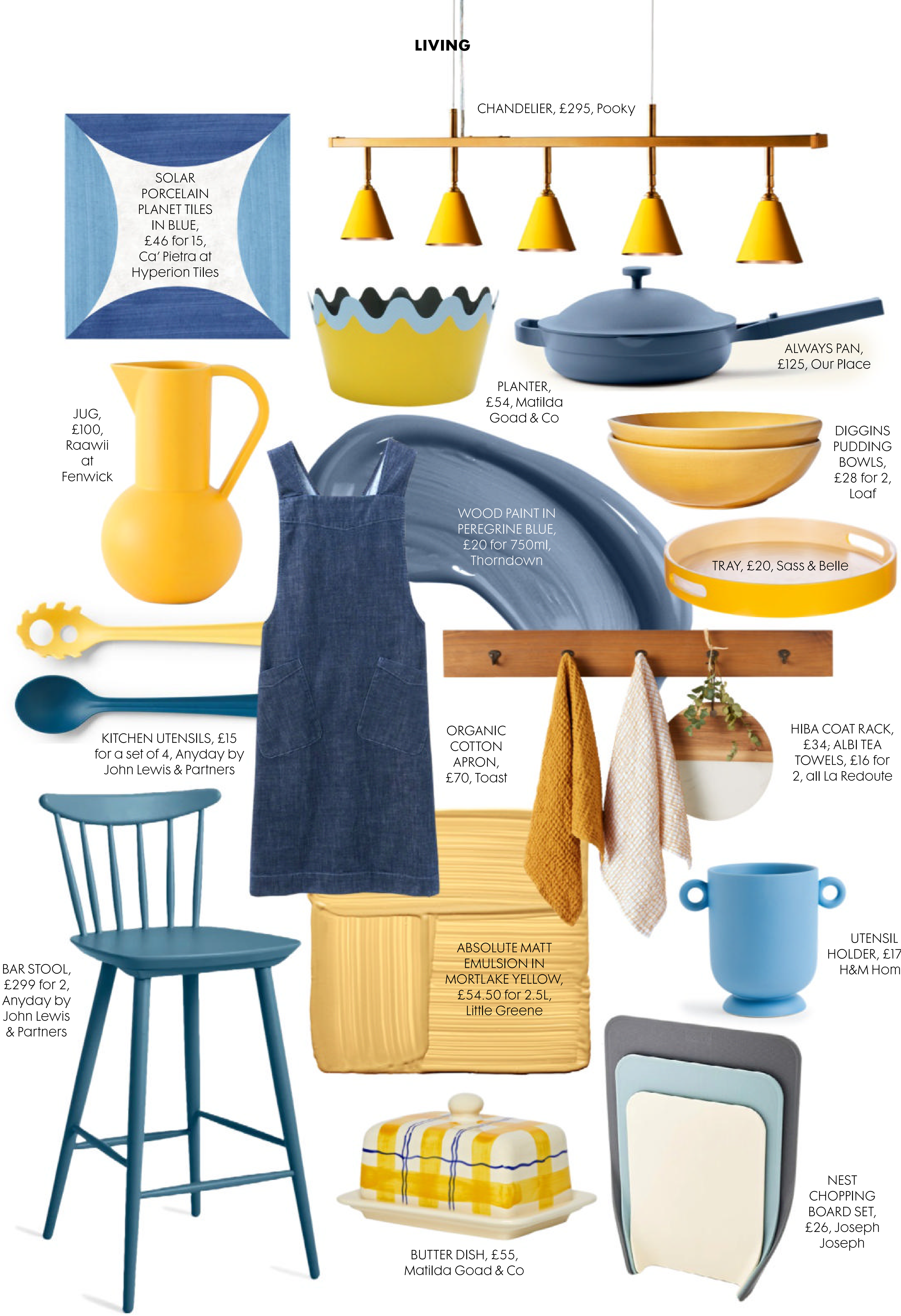

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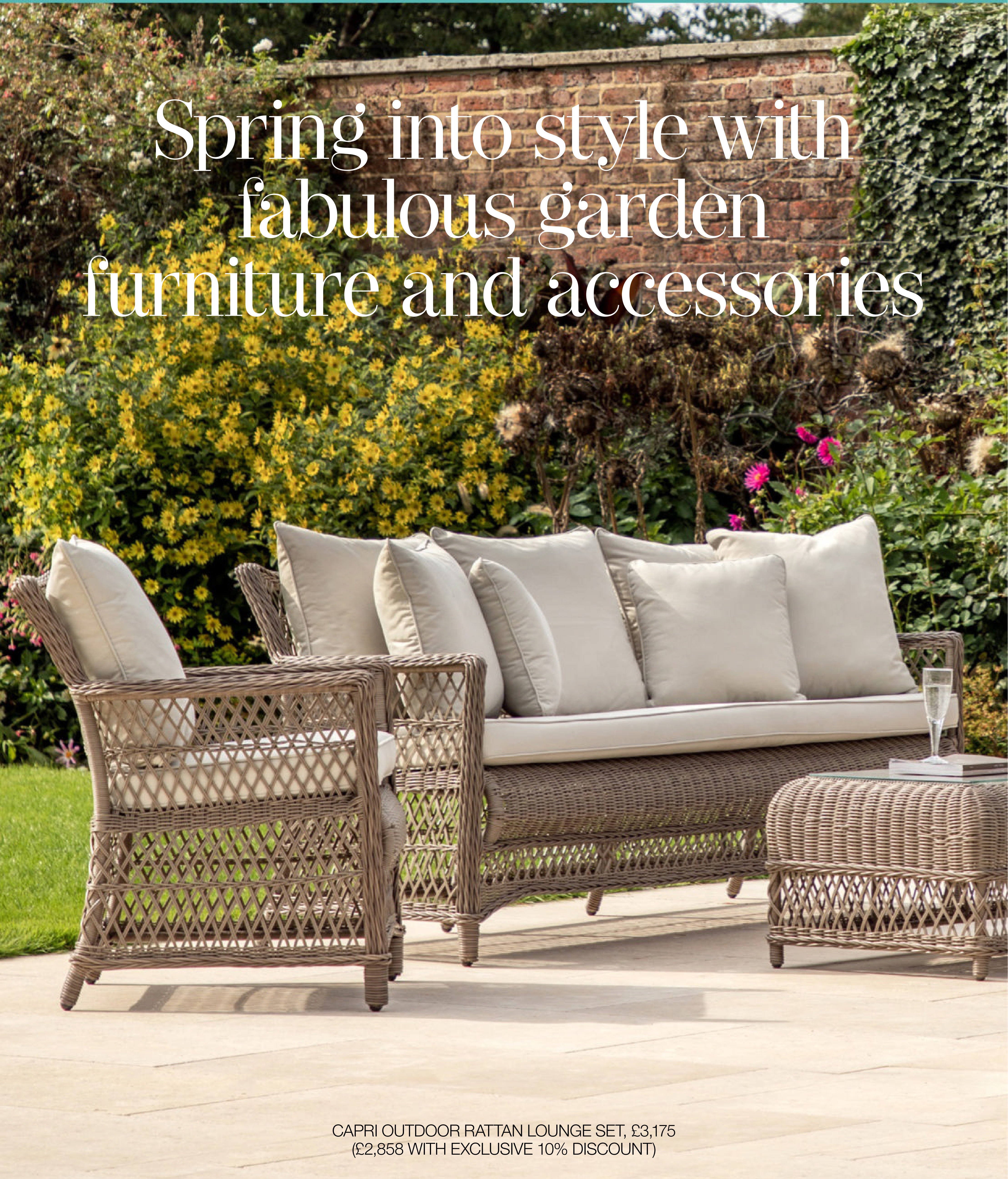

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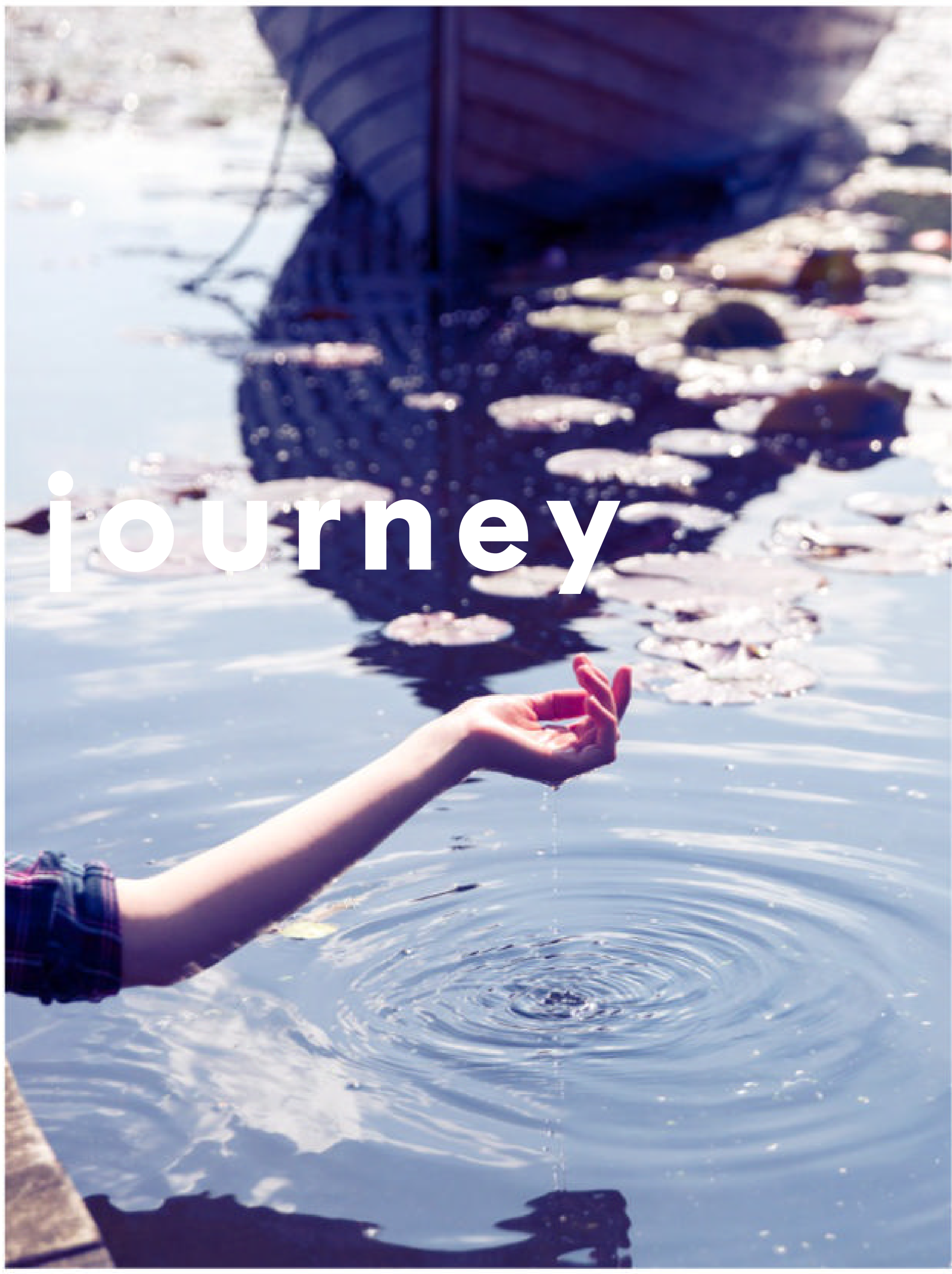
TRAIN *first, talk* LATER

Scheduling a pre-therapy workout could enhance the benefits of your conversation, according to recent research by Iowa State University. Not only was half an hour of exercise prior to a time slot found to help reduce depressive symptoms, but moderate activity – broadly defined as getting your heart rate into the 120 to 140 bpm range – can also result in a better mood and engage biological pathways that could support the therapeutic effects, says author Jacob Meyer, an assistant professor of kinesiology. Besides being an effective attitude adjuster, a workout can also improve energy levels, potentially making other forms of difficult conversation easier to manage.

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

A sensory journey



AUTHOR AND SPEAKER GRETCHEN RUBIN IS KNOWN FOR INSPIRING MILLIONS TO BUILD HAPPIER LIVES. HERE, SHE EXPLAINS HER LATEST DISCOVERY – THE SIMPLE YET TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF TUNING IN TO YOUR FIVE SENSES

One ordinary afternoon, I had an epiphany that changed my life. I'd woken up to find that the whites of my eyes had turned an angry pink – the distinctive symptom of pinkeye – so I took myself to an eye doctor. He confirmed my simple diagnosis, then remarked very casually: 'Be sure to schedule a check-up. Because you're extremely nearsighted, you're more at risk of developing a detached retina.'

'Wait, what?' I asked.

He repeated himself, and I listened with mounting alarm; a friend had recently lost some of his sight due to a detached retina.

By the time I left his office, I felt frightened. My eyes! As I headed home, I realised it had been a long time since I'd really looked at the New York City streetscape that I lived in and loved. What if it dimmed or vanished for me?

I turned a corner, and in that instant, all my senses seemed to sharpen. It was as if every knob in my brain had suddenly been dialled to its maximum setting of awareness. I gazed through my sticky eyes at the luminous grey sky. I picked out every sound in the weekday racket of sirens, horns and shouts. I smelled a heady mixture of car exhaust, marijuana and honey-roasted peanuts being sold on the street. I had never experienced the world with such intensity.

My walk home only took 20 minutes, but it was transcendent, and I realised a profound truth: I have one body, and the capacities it has right now won't last for ever.

For years, I'd been reflecting on how we can build happier lives. I'd written books such as *The Happiness Project* and *Better Than Before*, and every week I hosted the *Happier With Gretchen Rubin* podcast.

Nevertheless, I'd started to notice that I felt stuck in my head, disconnected from the world, other people and also from myself. That unforgettable

'I REALISED I NEEDED TO RECONNECT WITH MY FIVE SENSES'

walk helped me discover what I'd been missing: I needed to reconnect with my five senses.

Over the years, I've heard from other people that they also felt locked in their heads. Now more than ever, it's easy to drift out of touch with our senses, which are blunted or over-stimulated by screens, deodorant, fructose syrup and elevator music. Now I wanted to make direct contact.

To recreate the extraordinary intensity I'd felt during my walk, I challenged myself to tune in to the sensory world. In my new book, *Life In Five Senses*, I describe my experiences as I studied, explored and experimented. I knew, of course, that I could have a happy, complete life even if I lost some of my body's capabilities; my fear was that one day I'd regret everything that I'd ignored.

So I studied the magic of ketchup, tried a sound bath, visited The Metropolitan Museum of Art every day for a year – all to see how tuning in to my senses could lead me to a happier, healthier, more productive and creative life.

We all experience the world with our own particular complement of senses, but from my small study, I discovered larger truths. I was able to get out of my head and into the world – to find more love, energy and delight for the ordinary moments of life. Here's what I learned…

1

Seeing

I began my study with sight because, in humans, the visual system is the most highly developed. I was surprised to learn that we don't actually see a clear picture of the world – our brains tinker with the view. For example, with 'colour constancy', we know that snow remains white even when it looks blue. With 'size constancy', we understand that a tree stays the same size, even when we walk closer to it.

Something we see can make us laugh, cry or change our lives, but what's familiar is easy to ignore, and I know that I'd often used my power of sight in a purely utilitarian way. 'Nobody really looks at anything – it's too hard,' Andy Warhol observed. I wanted to push myself to see.

One important aim for my study was to connect more deeply with the people I loved, so I turned my sight to my husband, Jamie. I hoped that by paying more attention to the outer Jamie, I'd get insights into the inner Jamie – and I did.

For instance, for several mornings in a row, I'd picked up a peanut-butter-covered spoon and rinsed it off. It was only on the fourth morning that I thought to ask Jamie: 'Have you been having trouble sleeping?' A spoonful of peanut butter was his favourite midnight snack, but I hadn't noticed this clue; I saw the spoon without seeing it. When I knew to ask the question, Jamie told me about a difficult work problem that was keeping him awake. By seeing what I'd overlooked, we connected in a way that I would have missed if I hadn't been paying attention.

2

Smelling

Our ability to smell arises from sensory receptor cells inside the nose – and, I learned, through the mouth. With retronasal olfaction, we also smell food when it's in our mouth. This process helps us to enjoy food and drink because smell and taste combine to give us 'flavour'. Without smell, we get merely the basic tastes of sweet, salty, bitter, sour and umami; with smell, we experience complex flavours.

To enhance my experience of smell, I signed up for two fragrance courses. Our professor taught us that to smell more effectively, you should clear your nose, smell the crook of your own elbow, wave an item below your nose as you sniff and smell everything. 'Snap a twig,' my professor said, 'sniff the inside of a leather bag or scrape an orange.'

The more we know, the more we notice, and this class helped me to appreciate the smells I encountered in my ordinary life. I even found greater relish for disagreeable smells – such as the aroma floating above our kitchen waste bin – because they gave depth to the sensation.

This greater awareness helped me to feel more present in my body. We can't technically detect a scent over and over – we can't bookmark it, rewind it or save it for later. Explicitly training my attention on the smell of a shoe store or the lobby of my daughter's school gave me a sense of being present, of being exactly where I was in that moment.

3

Hearing

This one, for me, was a neglected sense: I rarely turned to my hearing for pleasure or comfort, and I was more concerned with avoiding the negative (the sounds of construction or a noisy restaurant) than appreciating the positive.

To tune in to my sense of hearing, music was an obvious place to begin. All human societies have music, and research shows that music has a dramatic influence on our bodies, minds and behaviour. Listening to a favourite upbeat song is one of the quickest ways we can boost our energy and ease stress.

To tap into the power of music, I created an 'Audio Apothecary' playlist of songs that gave me a boost. That way, whenever I was feeling blue or lethargic, I could listen to songs such as Dolly Parton's *Mule Skinner Blues* and Rihanna's *Pon De Replay* to give myself a quick lift. Turning to music in times of need helped me reconnect with my sense of hearing and allowed me to uncover a new sense of enthusiasm and energy.

'IN TIMES OF NEED, MUSIC HELPED ME UNCOVER A NEW SENSE OF ENERGY'

PHOTOGRAPHY: MIQUEL LLONCH AND SERGEY FILIMONOV/STOCKSY, GETTY, ELENA SEIBERT

4

Tasting

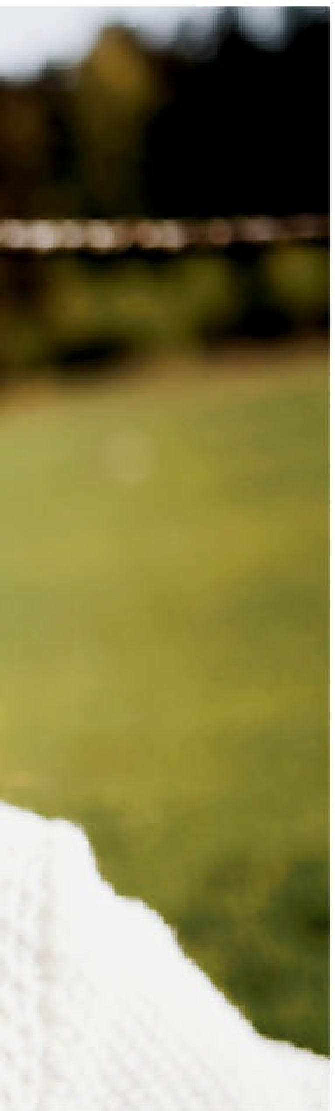
People love taste-related activities such as cooking and trying new restaurants. What we eat, with whom we eat and how we eat are choices that tie us to our identity, our memories and our culture.

For me, however, taste was another neglected sense. I ate the same foods all the time and rarely paid much attention to what I put in my mouth. To tap into the power of taste, especially its ability to bring people together, I decided to throw a 'Taste Party' where my friends and I could compare and review different tastes.

I set out samples of apples, crisps, nuts and chocolate bars for us to judge according to criteria such as texture, aftertaste and aroma.

Doing these taste tests was tremendously fun. My friends and I weren't just socialising, we were sharing a sensory experience and our conversation felt unusually warm and intimate. Learning little details – one friend is sensitive to food texture, another dislikes most fruits – gave me a better sense of who they are.

My experiments in taste taught me to try to notice distinct flavours in what I was eating, and this greater refinement of sensation gave me more pleasure and interest during daily mealtimes.



5

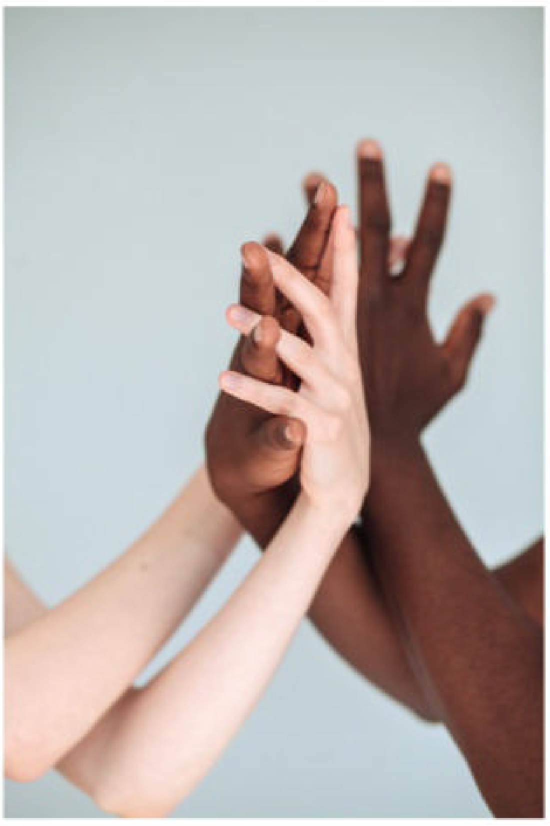
Touching

While the sense organs such as the eyes, ears, nose and tongue are all part of the head, skin covers the whole body. Our sense of touch plays a special role in our relationship with other people, and appropriate touch helps to: lower stress, blood pressure and pain; boost our immune system and mood; and helps us to sleep better.

To tap into the power of touch with Jamie, I made sure that each hug was a real embrace, and when we walked our dog, Barnaby, I'd take Jamie's hand.

I also used touch to soothe inevitable irritations. During one particular conversation, I put my hand on his back. The physical connection helped us keep the conversation light and warm. These days, whenever we start to argue, I take Jamie's hand. It's hard to yell at someone while you're holding their hand.

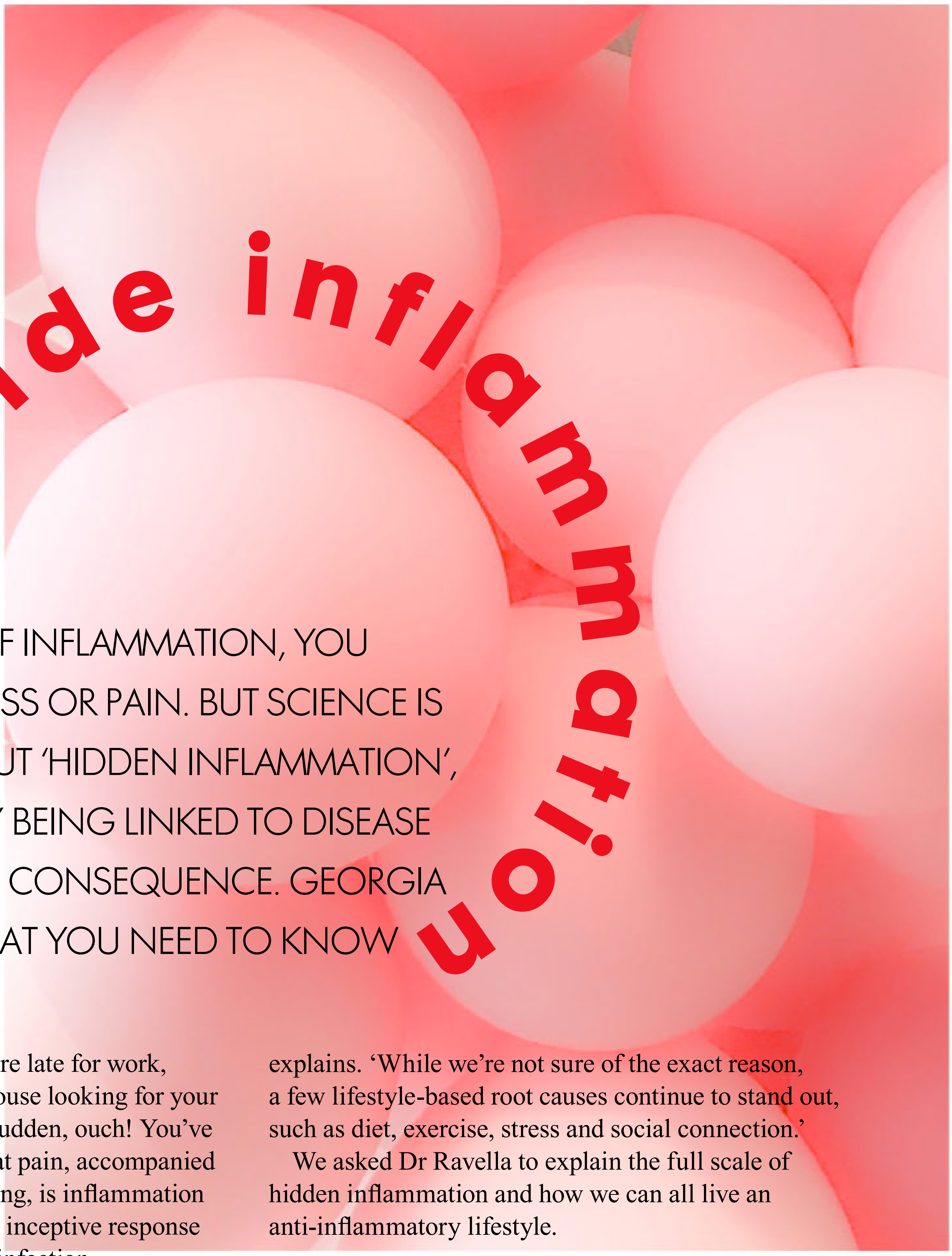
Of course, we benefit from many kinds of touch. A massage, a hug from a friend, a handshake from a colleague or even holding a pet. I realised just how much comfort and energy can be found in connecting through touch.



The joy of the senses

When I began my explorations, I'd hoped that I could knit my body and mind together for a greater sense of energy, playfulness and connection. My results wildly exceeded what I'd expected. I learned that when we tune in to our five senses, the present feels more vivid because we experience each moment more mindfully and we also feel more connected to our past. We feel both calmer and more energetic. We have more moments of fun, delight and awe because the world is suddenly richer. And perhaps best of all, our five senses can help us pay more attention to the people we love, which can strengthen those bonds. My exploration of the five senses has transformed my life. It's easy to use them to your advantage – all you have to do is make a conscious effort to tune in. Every day, I tap into the power of my senses to connect me to the people, places and ordinary moments that I want to experience and remember. And I'll never take ketchup for granted again.

Life In Five Senses: How Exploring The Senses Got Me Out Of My Head And Into The World (Two Roads) by Gretchen Rubin is out 18th April and is available to preorder now



Inside inflammation

WHEN YOU THINK OF INFLAMMATION, YOU PROBABLY PICTURE REDNESS OR PAIN. BUT SCIENCE IS UNCOVERING MORE ABOUT 'HIDDEN INFLAMMATION', WHICH IS INCREASINGLY BEING LINKED TO DISEASE AS A CAUSE – NOT JUST A CONSEQUENCE. GEORGIA GREEN FINDS OUT WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Picture the scene. You're late for work, rushing around the house looking for your shoes, when all of a sudden, ouch! You've stubbed your toe. That pain, accompanied by redness and swelling, is inflammation – your body's ancient inceptive response to injury, illness and infection.

Most of the time, inflammation is a helpful response that keeps us healthy and alive. But as our modern Western way of life has shifted so drastically from past times – we're sedentary most of the day, devoid of contact with nature, eating processed food and inhaling polluted air – inflammation now comes with a biological price; sometimes it turns against the body and aids the development of autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and type 1 diabetes.

This definition of inflammation is what the medical world has understood for decades; however an emerging idea looks at how 'hidden inflammation' could be making us all unhealthier. Transplant gastroenterologist Dr Shilpa Ravella, author of *A Silent Fire: The Story Of Inflammation, Diet And Disease*, believes hidden inflammation is a common root of modern disease – including cancer, heart disease and depression – and that it's simmering under the surface for most people.

'Hidden inflammation is essentially low-level chronic inflammation that seeps through our bodies,' Dr Ravella explains. 'While we're not sure of the exact reason, a few lifestyle-based root causes continue to stand out, such as diet, exercise, stress and social connection.'

We asked Dr Ravella to explain the full scale of hidden inflammation and how we can all live an anti-inflammatory lifestyle.

So, what is hidden inflammation?

It's low-level chronic inflammation that can present anywhere in the body and has been linked to a variety of modern chronic diseases, including some of our most-pressing killers such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity and neurodegenerative diseases. The problem is that, while regular inflammation comes and goes with quite obvious indicators – redness, heat, swelling, pain and loss of function – hidden inflammation lurks in the body more or less unknowingly. In other words, an outwardly fit and healthy person can harbour insidious hidden inflammation and not know it.

Certain people are more predisposed to inflammation. Genetics can play a part in our body's immune responses, and ageing in itself is an inflammatory process – when body fat moves from the periphery of the body to the midsection, it increases the likelihood of visceral fat (more on that later). Additionally, hormone levels drop as we get older, and the fall in oestrogen during the menopause causes immune cells to break bone down.

Links have also been found between inflammation and mental health. If you have a chronic inflammatory disorder, you're more likely to be depressed, but the effect isn't entirely due to the quality-of-life changes brought on by your disease. Previously thought impossible, inflammation can cross the blood brain-barrier, so inflammation in the body can actually affect mood and cognition.

How to spot hidden inflammation

The name speaks for itself – hidden inflammation can be difficult to uncover. It's likely many of us have it without knowing, although there are certain markers to look for.

One is belly fat because it's a strong indication of visceral fat, which wraps around your inner abdominal organs and blood vessels and is highly inflammatory. Another indicator is high blood sugar; however you could be silently inflamed without either of these markers.

While it's not routine (yet), tests can spot hidden inflammation. A blood test for a marker called C-reactive protein will show whether there's an elevated level of inflammation present – although it can't show where in the body the inflammation originates.

Because it's so hard to know whether you have it, it's worth following an anti-inflammatory lifestyle – as much as possible – as a preventative measure.

> 'THERE'S A STRONG ARGUMENT THAT WE'RE "TOO CLEAN" THESE DAYS'

Prevention over cure

It's far easier to prevent inflammation through steady lifestyle changes than to treat the heart disease it could potentially cause years down the line. Here are my tips…

Eat to beat inflammation

There are many myths surrounding what an 'anti-inflammatory' diet looks like. One misconception is that you must cut out gluten and grains, but a true anti-inflammatory diet is inclusive of these.

Fibre is our most important anti-inflammatory nutrient and it's essential that it comes from whole foods, not supplements. The recommended daily fibre intake for UK adults is 30g; however the average intake is 18g – 60% of what it should be. Our ancestors were eating 100g of fibre a day, so even 30g is just a starting point. Foods rich in fibre include pulses, wholegrains, apples and avocado.

Polyunsaturated fats such as omega-3 (found in oily fish, nuts and seeds) have highly anti-inflammatory effects on the body. Polyphenols – a plant compound with anti-inflammatory effects – should also be on your radar. The best sources are colourful fruits and vegetables such as berries, plums, spinach, red onions and kale.

Animal protein has been linked by several studies to inflammation and a higher risk of various chronic diseases. I'd advise eating a mostly plant-based diet that embraces a wide range of fruits and vegetables, is packed full of daily fibre, includes plenty of omega-3 and stays away from saturated fats as much as possible.

Anti-inflammatory movement

Exercise has a calming effect on inflammation. All exercise counts (as long as you're not overexercising and causing injury), but in my opinion, the best type of exercise is 'habitual movement'. This is where exercise is woven into daily life – it's a brisk walk to the shops instead of driving the car, taking the stairs instead of the escalator and participating in DIY tasks.

Stretching is also beneficial for keeping inflammation at bay. In one study, scientists injected rats with a chemical called carrageenan to create local inflammation in their backs. They then encouraged the rats to perform 'rat yoga', by gently lifting them by their tail and off their hind legs to encourage them to grasp the edge of a platform and thus stretch out. After two weeks of twice-daily yoga, the rats behaved as though they had taken an anti-inflammatory drug, displaying less back pain and movement restriction.

Conquer stress

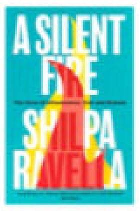
Easy to say, harder to do. But stress has long been linked to an increased risk of all chronic diseases. Why? That's never been known, but from my research, it's highly likely that hidden inflammation is the missing link.

For stress management, I look to Blue Zone dwellers (areas with the highest proportion of centenarians, such as Okinawa in Japan and Sardinia in Italy). They counter stress each day by getting ample sleep, abiding by their circadian rhythm (no blue light after sundown), engaging in meditation or yoga, being immersed in the natural world and fostering social connections by sharing meals with friends and family.

Strengthen the microbiome

The gut plays a huge role in shaping the immune system. This should be done in two ways: firstly, by optimising your diet. Try to include not only plenty of fibre from whole plants but also some fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir and miso. Secondly, it's important to expose ourselves to germs in the natural world. That's not the germs harboured in cold and flu viruses, but the plethora of bacteria found in nature that human beings evolved alongside. There's a strong argument that we're 'too clean' these days – the household cleaning products we use to obliterate all germs are not the kindest option. A better solution is to use home-made cleaning products free of non-toxic chemicals.

It's equally important to surround yourself with nature as much as possible, exposing yourself to a world of microbes that train your immune system not to overreact to germs or develop a predisposition to autoimmunity. This can look like a hike in the countryside or cultivating a vegetable patch.



A Silent Fire: The Story Of Inflammation, Diet And Disease (Bodley Head) by Shilpa Ravella is out now

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

Slide on over

WANT A LOW-IMPACT WORKOUT THAT IS ALSO HIGH INTENSITY? SLIDER WORKOUTS CHALLENGE YOUR BODY, FIRE YOUR CORE AND ENGAGE YOUR BRAIN. HERE'S HOW TO DO THEM

Necessity is the mother of invention. That's how the trainer Kara Liotta reignited her love of slider workouts. 'I needed a different way to work out with what I had at home during the pandemic,' she says. 'I didn't have bands and balls and heavy weights, but I had a piece of paper.' Liotta went on to lead hundreds of strength and HIIT workouts using only scraps of paper or the occasional paper plate.

If you're questioning how flimsy sheets of paper can power a sweat session, let's wind back. The pieces of paper served as sliders (or gliders, depending on who you're talking to), which are, at their simplest, unstable surfaces that allow your feet or hands to glide along the floor with ease and fire up muscles in a whole new way.

Sliders aren't new. But their small size, affordable price and overall accessibility make them perfect for an anytime workout – key qualities in any fitness routine these days. That and their ability to level up any body-weight movement (squats, lunges, planks, hamstring curls, press-ups…) in a typical strength workout. 'They're a great way to get bang for your buck because you're targeting different areas and muscle groups at one time,' says Liotta, who's also co-founder of New York fitness studio KKSweat. 'Sliders are their own kind of burn.'

A warning, though. The first few times you work with sliders, you might notice a sensation in your muscles you've probably never thought about before – a result of being on a dynamic surface. You're tapping into small stabilising muscles all over the body to keep form from faltering – so you're ultimately firing more muscles at the same time when sliders are involved.

'Sliders activate the deep core, hip stabilisers and shoulder stabilisers,' says Chelsea Long, exercise physiologist at New York's Hospital for Special Surgery's Tisch Sports Performance Center. 'And you can use a lot less resistance to achieve the same intensity,' she adds – minimising stress on the joints, yet still improving muscular endurance, mobility and balance.

The challenge of balancing will also give you a mental workout. 'Your brain is more in tune with your body,' says Long. 'You're able to feel that little shift in the hip, the ankle moving around or your foot burning from standing on one leg. The neurological connection to the movement pattern gets more defined and direct.' Long compares it to when you're trying to use good penmanship as opposed to scribbling notes. But that's not all for the brain benefits. 'Your mind has to determine its spatial awareness more than when on a stable surface,' says Janeil Mason, who runs Fit and Lit dance cardio classes in New York. 'No matter your age, you should incorporate balance exercises, such as with sliders, into your routine.'

With that in mind, let's get geared up for flawless form – and a serious sweat.

FINESSE YOUR FORM

Follow these cues from Janeil Mason to move with confidence and control

1. LOSE THE SHOES.

Going barefoot (or in socks) helps you engage more muscles and work on ankle mobility. '[Trainers] can act like a cast, limiting full movement of the foot,' says Mason. Being barefoot allows the toes and ankles to move more.

2. THINK 'MICRO' MOTION.

It doesn't take much to hit your core and muscles during slider workouts, so consider keeping them under near-constant tension as you move within a position. Your range of motion can be small – even as little as an inch or two of movement – until you gain control and strength.

3. MODIFY WHEN NEEDED.

Single-sided standing moves (see the lateral lunge over the page) are a major challenge, says Mason. Gently place your fingertips on a wall or on the top of a chair or stool as an extra point of stability if your balance is wonky.

4. CHECK FOOT PLACEMENT.

For most lower-body moves, you want to place the entire ball of your foot on the slider to create a strong base of support and to keep your feet from slipping off as you move. The working leg is generally the one off the slider, but both are firing non-stop.

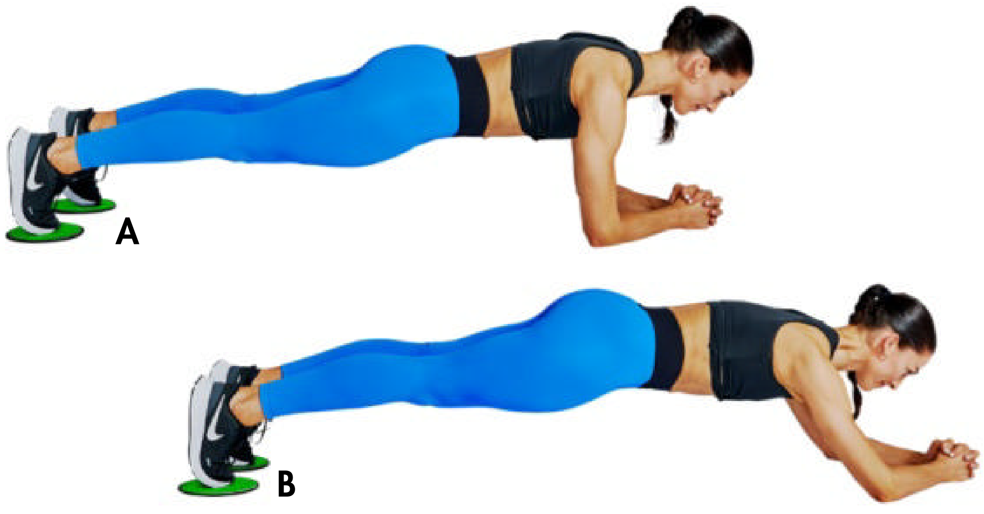
SLOW AND STEADY STRENGTH

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete moves in order, each for 45 secs, then rest for 15 secs. Continue to the next exercise. Repeat the circuit 4 times (about 25 mins). For unilateral moves, start on the right and alternate the moving leg each round. LEVEL UP: Hold a 2kg to 4kg weight at your chest in rounds 3 and 4 when you do the lateral and curtsy lunges. You'll turn up the resistance and recruit your core.

1

Plank saw

HOW TO: Place a slider under each foot and set up in a forearm plank with your elbows stacked under your shoulders (A). Slowly slide back (B) to front, engaging your back muscles as if you're doing a horizontal pull-up, dragging the sliders along the floor.



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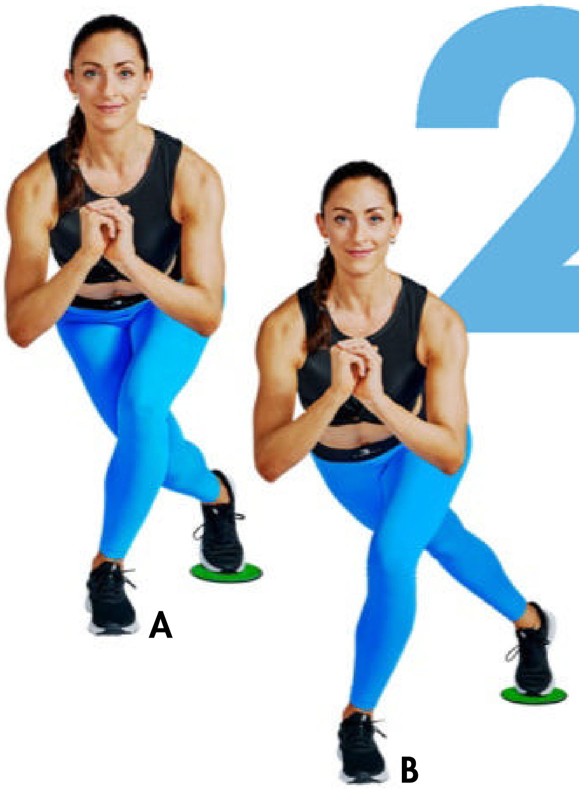


'Scrub the floor' curtsy

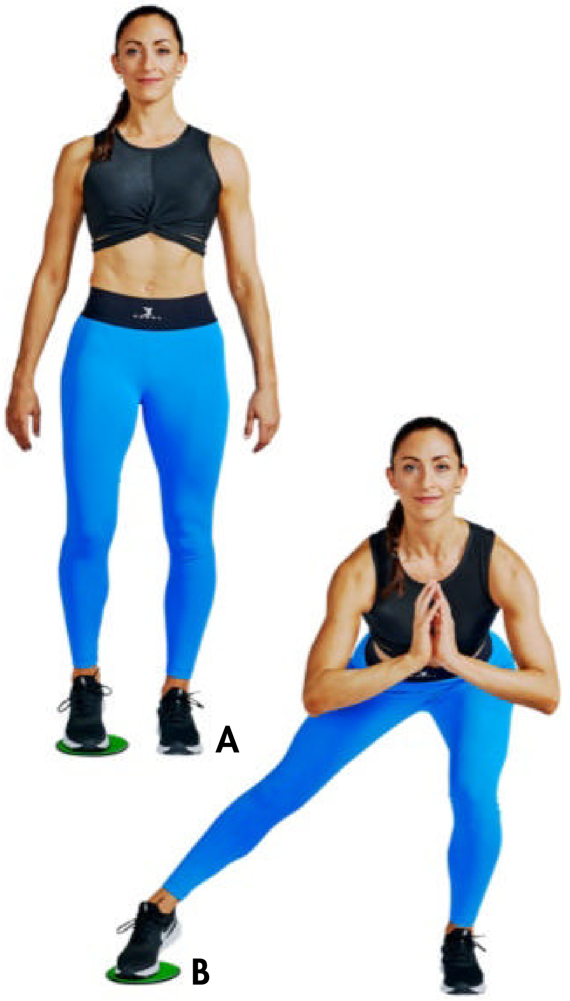
HOW TO: Stand on your left leg and place a slider under the ball of your right foot. Keeping your shoulders and hips square, wrap your right leg behind you into a curtsy lunge and hold it at the bottom (A). Your spine can tilt forwards slightly, but be sure to keep your back flat. Keeping a bend in your left leg, slide your right foot 15cm out to the side (B), then back to the starting position, while your left leg holds still and hips and glutes stay low.

3

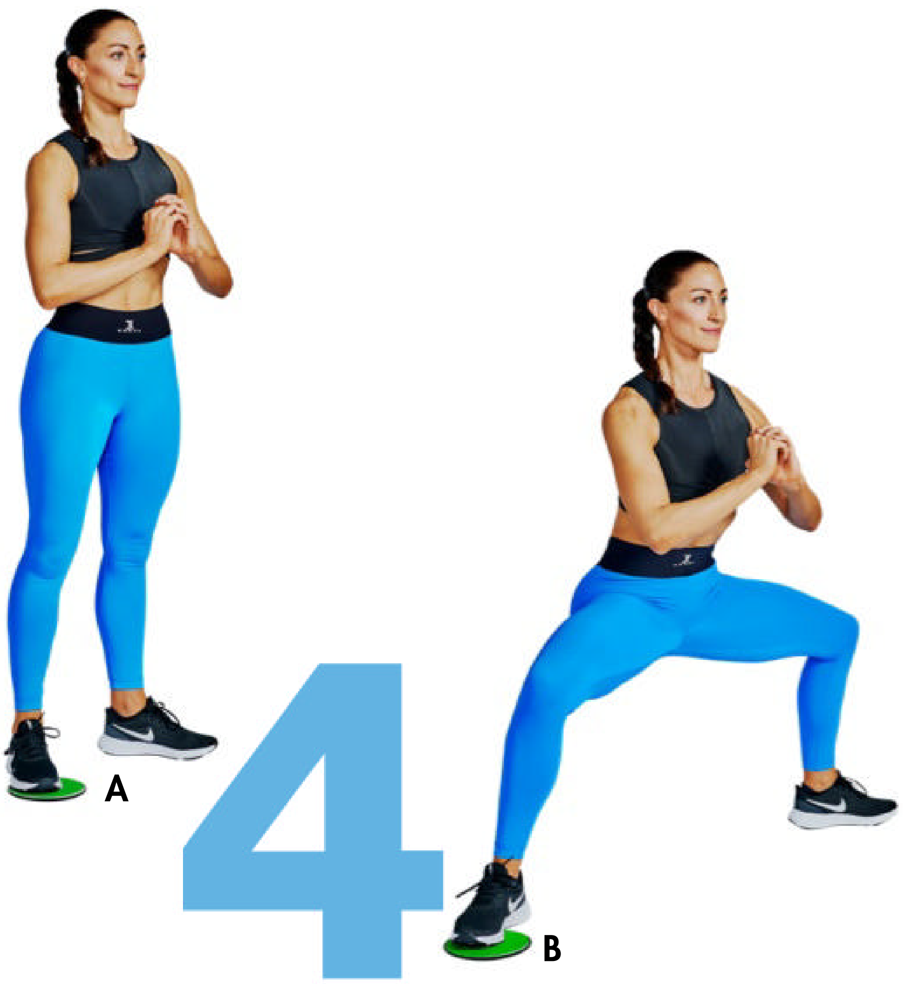
Lateral lunge

HOW TO: Place a slider under your right foot and keep your left foot on the floor (A). Begin to slowly hinge your hips as your left knee bends and right leg slides straight out to the right (B). Press into the ball of your right foot on the slider as you reverse the movement and pull your right leg in, returning to a standing position. When you reach your deepest lunge, keep your back flat and spine neutral. If you hunch or fall forwards, go up higher in the lunge.

TRAINER TIP: For a greater challenge, hold a dumbbell and swing it overhead every time you stand back up from the lunge.



WORDS: JENNIFER NIED. PHOTOGRAPHY: TYLER JOE, STOCKSY



4

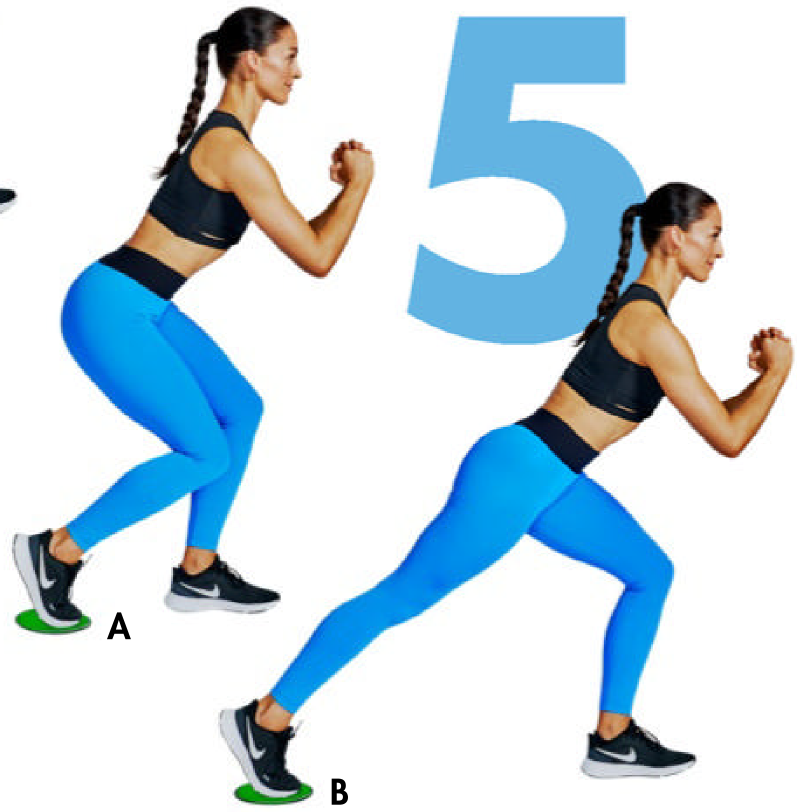
Slide to sumo squat

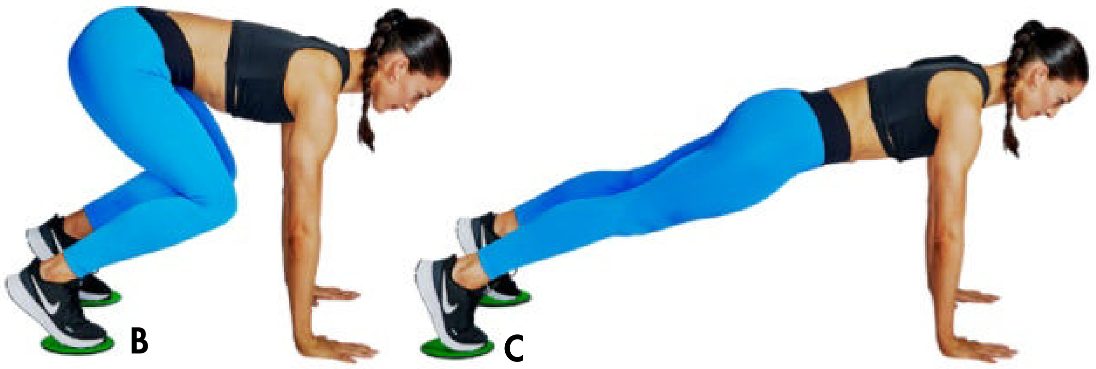
HOW TO: Stand with your weight in your left leg with a slider under your right foot, feet about hip-width apart and toes turned out slightly in a V shape (A). Keeping your spine tall, slowly slide your right leg out to the side, bending both knees into a sumo squat (keep your spine upright), knees over your ankles and bent 90 degrees (B). Once you're in a deep sumo squat, use your inner thighs to reverse the slide back to the start.

5

Split-squat knee drive

HOW TO: Stand with your weight in your left leg and place a slider under your right foot. Slide your right foot 15cm back so that your foot placement is staggered. Lift your right heel (A). Slide your hips back and bend your knees, arriving in a split squat with your legs staggered so there's more weight in your front leg. Hold your left leg still and slide your right foot straight back behind you (B). Return to the split-squat by driving your knee back in with force.





6

Down-up

HOW TO: Start standing with one slider under each foot and your arms reaching overhead (A). Hinge at your hips with a flat back to bring your hands down to the floor in front of you. Your heels can come off the ground if needed (B). Pressing your palms into the floor, slide your legs back, arriving in a high plank position (C). From the plank, engage your core and legs to bend your knees and drag the sliders forwards towards your palms so that you can return your heels to the floor and reach back up to standing with your arms overhead.

SLIDE STARS

If you have any of the items below, you're ready to do the workout on this page. The key: a material that slides smoothly on a flat surface. 'If there's friction or something is stopping you from completing the exercise, it's probably not slick enough,' notes Mason.

For hardwood or tiled floors: Dryer sheets, towels, socks, sliders.

For a rug or carpet: Paper plates, furniture movers.

For anywhere: Valslide Discs (with padding on one side and smooth plastic on the other, this durable pair turns rugged, tiled, lino or even rubber flooring into a suitable training surface. £36, blkboxfitness.com). Sklz Slidez Dual-Sided Exercise Glider Discs (the hexagon shape and grippy texture mean your hands and feet stay put, allowing you to flow gracefully through your sweat session. £19, amazon.co.uk).

The diagnosis debate

WITH MORE PEOPLE REPORTING MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS THAN EVER BEFORE, YOU MIGHT THINK A FORMAL DIAGNOSIS IS THE SILVER BULLET TO A SWIFT RECOVERY. BUT, AS ELLA DOVE DISCOVERS, IT'S A LOT MORE COMPLEX THAN THAT

Our collective attitude towards mental health conditions has shifted dramatically in the past few decades. With increased understanding and acceptance of the complexities surrounding mental health, we are more likely to recognise symptoms in ourselves and others, and more open about our experiences. Celebrities such as Chrissy Teigen and Lady Gaga have shared their complex mental health diagnoses, contributing to a cultural shift from shame and secrecy to bravery and transparency.

Yet, it's hard to know whether the rise in mental health diagnoses is because more people are willing to seek help, or because mental health issues themselves are increasing. There's no doubt, though, that more people than ever are receiving diagnoses, particularly among younger generations. In 2022, one in four people aged 17-19 had a mental disorder, compared to one in 10 in 2018. Meanwhile, one in six adults experienced some form of depression in summer 2021 – above the pre-pandemic level of one in 10.

Diagnosis of mental health conditions remains a complex issue. 'Giving something a name has power, but that power can be helpful or damaging,' explains psychotherapist Charlotte Fox Weber, author of *What We Want*. 'When it comes to naming a mental health problem, names and terms can be tools or weapons.'

'GIVING SOMETHING A NAME HAS POWER BUT THAT CAN BE DAMAGING'

Does a diagnosis help or hinder?

In simple terms, diagnosis is the act of being told you have a condition; it's the label given to you by a medical professional. In many cases, the diagnosis can open the door to specific support and treatment, such as medication or therapy, but this isn't always the case.

According to Jane Caro, associate director of programmes at the Mental Health Foundation, many people find diagnosis helpful, as it validates and de-stigmatises the struggles they've been experiencing. 'To them, a diagnosis means it wasn't them just making it up.'

This was the case for Vairi Alison, 37, who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder eight years ago. 'When I received my diagnosis, my first reaction was relief,' she says. 'It helped me to understand there was a reason as to why I had struggled for so long. I now accept that my diagnosis is a part of my story and I've been able to use this to manage my mood changes. I can now identify that how I feel is symptomatic and not fact, which allows me to tell myself it will pass.'

Diagnosis in the long term has been invaluable for Alison, but she has also experienced its downsides. 'I became angry and overwhelmed for a while,' she says. 'It terrified me that this would be something I'd have to face for the rest of my life. It also made me question a lot of my past decisions and actions. I convinced myself I wouldn't have made certain mistakes if I wasn't living with the condition.'

Then there's the danger that can arise from trying to shoehorn people into neat boxes. 'It's almost like having a neat system of distinct categories that you can put people into but, actually, there are many people who are dealing with complex difficulties and don't fit into any one category,' explains Caro. 'For those people, the process of being diagnosed can feel like a dehumanising experience because they're not able to connect with that diagnosis.'

Plus, says Fox Weber, labels can become self-fulfilling prophecies. 'Once identified, it can become the lens through which everything is seen,' she says, which could make the condition feel even more all-encompassing than it was before.

Although these downsides are important to consider, the ultimate benefit of a diagnosis is that it should lead to more specific treatment, and allow an individual access to find a community and peer support. 'A specialist can give you advice and a treatment plan following diagnosis,' explains Dr Trudi Seneviratne OBE, consultant adult and perinatal psychiatrist and registrar of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Is self-diagnosis the same thing?

In addition to the usual 'Dr Google', experts are noticing a trend in people self-diagnosing mental health conditions using online personality quizzes, and apps like TikTok.

Charlie Rosse diagnosed herself with mild depression, anorexia and anxiety. 'I noticed that what I was feeling was more debilitating than just sadness or shyness, so I did some research on the NHS website and found a questionnaire that I think they use at the beginning of therapy to decide what kind of help the patient needs,' she says. 'I didn't want to get a formal diagnosis because I didn't feel it would help.' Most worryingly, she cites NHS waiting lists as a key reason. 'The process is so slow and you see people waiting months for appointments. As my problems are mild, I thought it would be better not to take a spot from someone who really needs it and I would be better off doing my own research to help myself.'

While the NHS website is trustworthy, many sources aren't – so Caro advises caution: 'Self-diagnosis encourages us to catastrophise. Most of us could look through diagnostic manuals and diagnose ourselves with umpteen things.'

She continues, 'If you find it comforting to feel part of a community, or it enables you to access self-help resources, then do it – but always make sure the source of information is legitimate.'

Managing misdiagnosis

One of the problems with self-diagnosis is that you could assign yourself the wrong diagnosis (which could mean coping strategies and treatments aren't right for you), but this risk isn't eliminated even if you go down the professional route. Misdiagnosis is a common occurrence – after all, it's not as simple as having a scan to determine a specific physical illness. Many mental health diagnoses are qualitative, and ultimately subjective.

'I see incorrect diagnoses of depression, anxiety, panic disorders and PTSD a lot,' says Dr Seneviratne. 'Psychosis is also often missed or misdiagnosed as anxiety.'

The impact of being too hastily diagnosed, misdiagnosed or given multiple labels from different professionals can be huge. 'The sense of shame is a big factor,' says Caro. 'When someone receives multiple diagnoses, they may start to think things like "What's wrong with me? I must be a useless person," and that is quite damaging.'

> 'ONE THING EXPERTS AGREE ON IS NOT SUFFERING IN SILENCE'

Allegra Chapman, co-founder of diversity and inclusion consultancy Watch This Sp_ce (watchthisspace.uk), believes she was misdiagnosed with depression and anxiety in her teens and 20s. 'It's likely that the depression and anxiety were symptoms of, or were caused by, neurodivergence – I have ADHD and I believe myself to be on the autistic spectrum,' she says. 'If healthcare professionals had uncovered this sooner, it could have saved me a lot of pain and confusion. I've come to learn that many healthcare professionals lack significant understanding of neurodiversity, particularly in women and girls.'

In fact, this speaks to a wider problem across healthcare – both physical and mental – in which women's health issues are frequently misunderstood or misdiagnosed.

Seeking a diagnosis is an individual choice, but one thing all the experts agree on is the importance of not suffering in silence. 'Write down how you're feeling or speak to people close to you to see if they have noticed a change in you,' suggests Dr Hana Patel, GP specialist in mental health (topdoctors.co.uk). Remember – you are not alone.

THE DIAGNOSIS ROADMAP

If you think you or a loved one would benefit from receiving a mental health diagnosis, here's the usual path to take…

See your GP

'GPs are able to diagnose and initiate treatment for common mental health presentations such as stress, anxiety, depression and postnatal depression,' says Dr Patel. 'With more complex mental health conditions, we have a role in managing patients once they are diagnosed by a psychiatrist and have started on treatment.'

Get referred to a specialist

'When you get into more complex conditions such as psychotic illnesses, schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder, eating disorders and neuropsychiatric issues, this is normally where psychiatrists come in,' says Dr Seneviratne. 'Your GP can refer you to a psychiatrist in the same way they'd refer you to an obstetrician.' In some areas, you may be able to self-refer, and you could choose to skip the GP and see a psychiatrist privately.

Psychiatric testing

A psychiatrist will provide a full examination, exploring whether the root of someone's symptoms could be a physical issue. 'We do biological investigations such as blood tests or checking someone's thyroid, as well as looking at family history. We also look at psychological factors, and explore any social or cultural issues,' says Dr Seneviratne. 'We will then ask: is there a place for medication in this? Is a biological treatment needed, or psychological treatments such as talking therapies? Psychiatrists will also look at whether someone needs support with the social side of things, for example benefits, housing, or getting a job. We are qualified doctors who have then gone down the route of specialising in all things mental health, so it's a very holistic approach.'

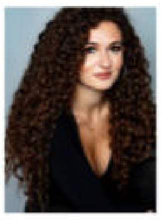
Getting diagnosed

The process could end with receiving a mental health diagnosis, and your psychiatrist will talk you through relevant treatment options, from medication to therapy, as well as peer support groups. It's likely you'd then be handed back to GPs and local mental health support services for follow-up care.

For more information, visit mentalhealth.org.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

THE WELLNESS INFLUENCER



HEALTH AND WELLBEING EDITOR ARIELLE STEELE SHARES HER FAVOURITE DISCOVERIES FOR BODY AND SOUL

3 SUMMER WELLNESS FESTIVALS TO BOOK NOW

Wellnergy Festival: This new day festival is coming to Barn Elms Sports Centre, south London, on 17th June. With its five pillars of mindfulness, fitness, food, music and laughter, there'll be talks from the likes of Dr Alex George and Alice Liveing, fitness workshops and feelgood sounds curated by The Gardens of Babylon. Tickets from £65; visit wellnergy.co.uk.

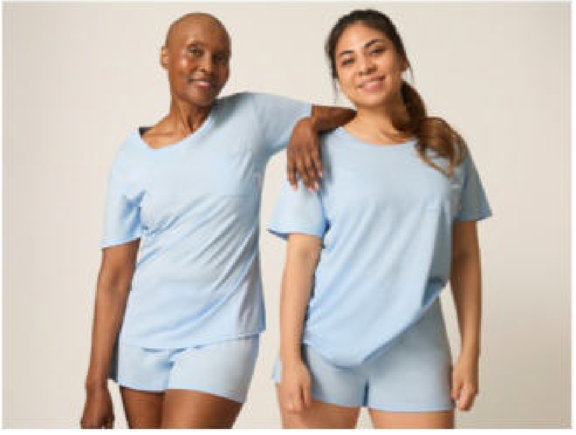
Fearne Cotton's Happy Place Festival: Taking place across two weekends at Chiswick House, London (15th-16th July), and Tatton Park, Cheshire (2nd-3rd September), expect a weekend packed with live podcast recordings, inspiring talks, classes and workshops, all handpicked by Fearne. Tickets from £38.50; visit happyplaceofficial.co.uk.

Verve Festival: Located at Hatch House in the Wiltshire countryside, this weekend festival returns on 16th-17th September. This is the place for yoga, meditation, great food and hitting the reset button. Tickets from £69 for one day; £139 for the weekend, plus camping from £75; feeltheverve.com.

TAKE A HIKE

On the hunt for walking boots that are extremely supportive while also surprisingly lightweight? These new boots from Ariat will be just the right fit.

SKYLINE SOLARIS H20 BOOT, £155, ariat.com



SLEEP COOL

If you're struggling with night sweats or tend to get hot throughout the night (like me), this sleep set from Modibodi (famed for its period pants) is a great solution. Using innovative ModiCool technology, they're designed to regulate body temperature, cooling the skin at the first sign of overheating, absorbing sweat and drying quickly for a better night's sleep. I love the calming blue shade and have been wearing my set night after night.

ModiCool T-shirt Sleep Set, £59, modibodi.co.uk

THE BAOBAB BOOST

I'm a huge fan of health shots (vitamins and minerals you can glug down in one swoop? Yes, please!) and my new favourites come from Unrooted (unrooteddrinks.com). Alongside the Original Baobab flavour, each shot in the range – Mighty Ginger, Punchy Turmeric and Apple Cider Vinegar – is enriched with this nutritional power fruit; baobab contains five times more fibre than oats, five times more vitamin C than oranges and twice as many antioxidants as acai. Impressive – and tasty, too. From £2 per shot, available at Ocado and Holland & Barrett.

20MG
COOL
BAOBAB
BOOST
MIND
BODY
GINGER
FRESH
APPLE
CIDER
GOOD

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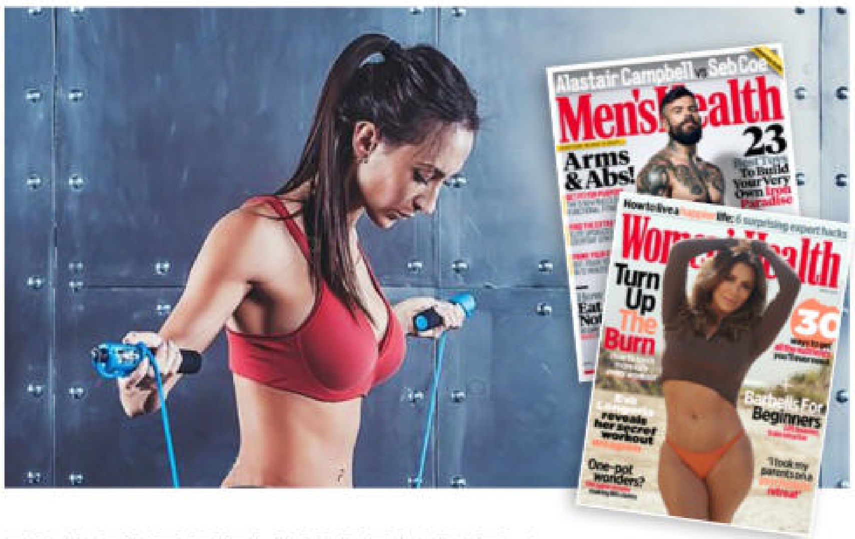

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ESCAPES

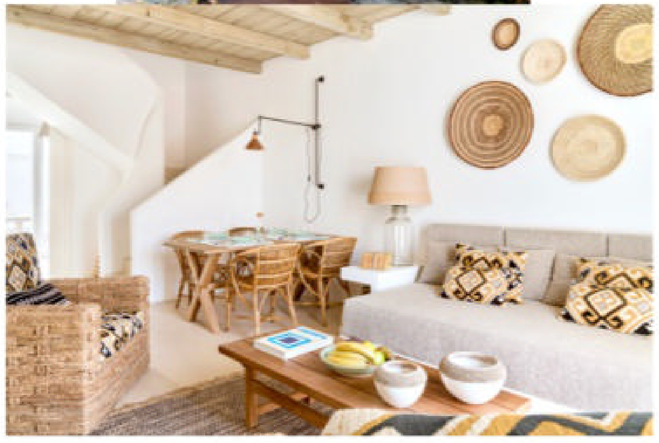
Edited by
Sarah Tomczak

Travel IN STYLE

ARTISANAL INFLUENCES AND LOCAL INSPIRATION HAVE TRANSFORMED THREE VERY DIFFERENT RESORTS TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL OF LUXURY. IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A BEAUTIFUL ESCAPE, IT STARTS HERE

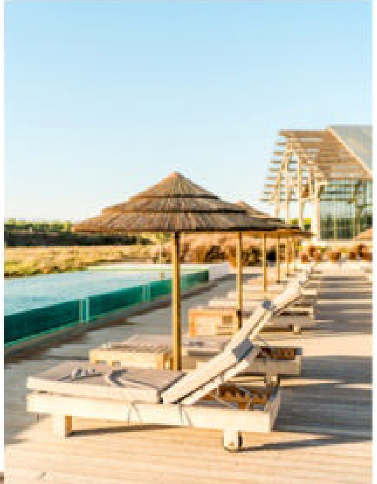
QUINTA DA COMPORTA, PORTUGAL

There are big skies over Quinta Da Comporta. Vast swathes of blue that greet you each morning the moment you step out on to your little terrace, as I do the first day I arrive, cup of Portuguese coffee in hand. Set in the rice fields in the village of Carvalhal, a 10-minute drive from the coast, Quinta is a bohemian but insanely elegant sun-bleached enclave of residences connected by windy paths and shaded by spikey grasses. The majority of its 61 architect-designed suites and rooms run along a little pathway, which has a slightly retro, holiday-camp vibe – reimagined for a cooler customer – while a few standalone villas, complete with private pools, are dotted around the outskirts of the resort. All pathways lead to a huge, glass-fronted, reclaimed-wood barn and restaurant, a solar-heated infinity pool lined with loungers and another double-height barn that houses the spa.

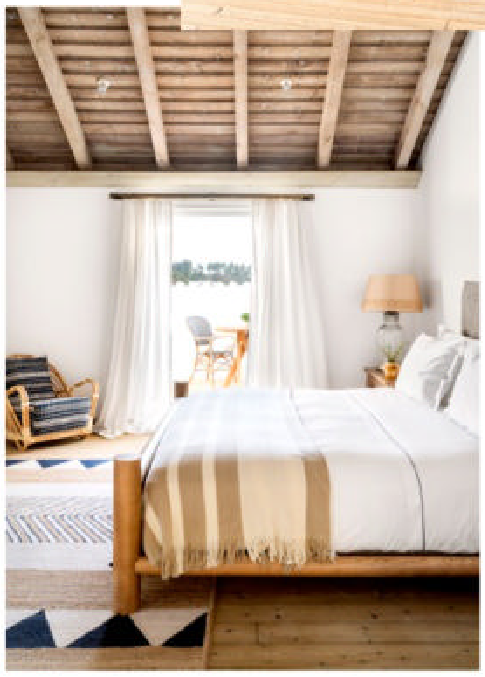


Above: wicker and rattan trays adorn the walls and sofa cushions are covered in local fabrics

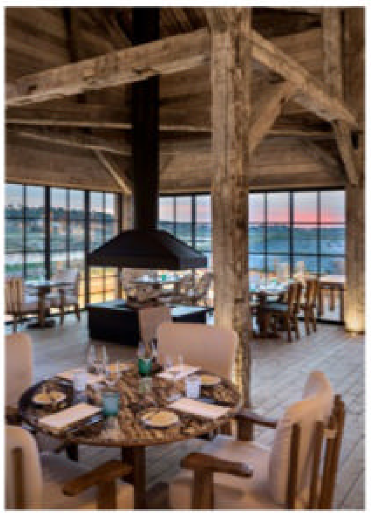
The aesthetic of this little oasis is just the right side of hip, with a big nod to its Portuguese heritage. Townhouses are built over two floors with small tiled kitchens, built-in sofas and private terraces. Whitewashed walls are adorned with decorative wicker trays, or the hotel's signature oversize rattan crabs, while chunky bamboo beds and armchairs have throws, pillows and upholstery in local artisan fabrics, providing a shot of colour. Exposed beams and lots of natural materials give the space an airy, wholesome feel. This is laid-back, sandy-footed luxury. Walk-in showers with zellige tiles are big enough for two and stuffed with the hotel's Oryza beauty products.



Wellness is at the heart of Quinta da Comporta, but it's a relaxed interpretation of the word, in that you are here to feel rested, nourished and restored rather than beaten into good health. The impressive and architectural Oryza spa has an indoor/outdoor pool, steam, sauna and hammam, six treatment rooms and the aforementioned line of rice-based 'rizotherapy' skincare products, using tailor-made essential oils. Yoga and meditation are on the daily schedule and the resort hosts regular wellness retreats with a procession of guest teachers and specialists. Even the spa's tiny shop is beautifully curated, selling stylish gymwear and beauty products.



Most of the action seems to centre around the main barn, which is home to a bar, lounge area and the main restaurant Mar D'Arrozal. Using fresh produce from the resort's expansive vegetable garden (which includes courgettes, peppers, chard, lemongrass and rosemary), plus local seafood, the array of ceviches and salads, grilled sea bass and tiger prawns are all standouts on the menu. Home-made spinach ravioli, pumpkin and chestnut soup and quinoa salad manage to be delicious yet also feel virtuous, while the roasted lamb (made to share), cauliflower gratin and hotel's signature chocolate mousse, decanted from a giant bowl, have quite the opposite effect, but are possibly the most incredible things you'll ever eat. Although the same could be said for breakfast, where home-made granola and avocado-topped toast are joined by a never-ending supply of tiny pastel de nata custard tarts.

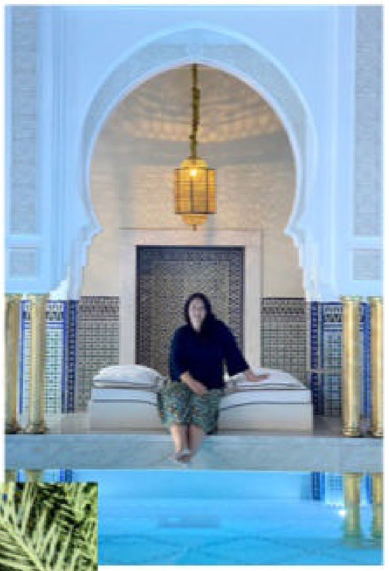


I visited Quinta Da Comporta during the spring, when the temperature dips in the morning and evening but the middle of the day is golden and warm – the staff say the best time to come is May, before the summer visitors fill the beaches (although the coastline here is generous, so I can't imagine it ever feels really cramped) and the mosquitoes become too enthusiastic. It's the kind of place you'd like to return to every season, though, just to see how it changes. It's really that good.
CORIN RIPLEY

This is relaxed, sandy-footed luxury at its best

DELUXE ROOMS AT QUINTA DA COMPORTA START FROM £220 A NIGHT. QUINTADACOMPORTA.COM

LA MAMOUNIA, MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

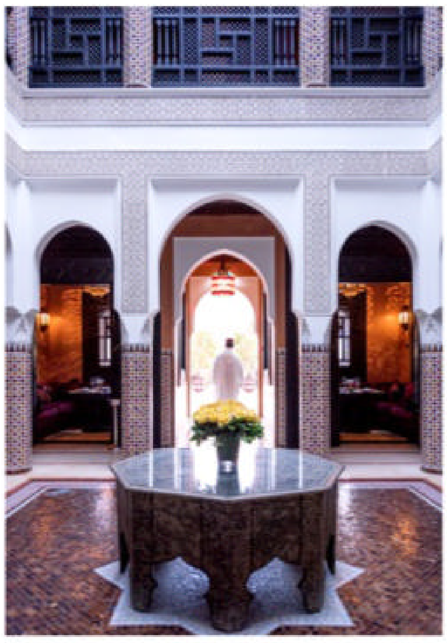


Emma in the 2,500 sq m spa, which features two hammams and an indoor heated pool

The elegantly dressed receptionists at La Mamounia have more patience than most. Ever since Anna Delvey, the ‘fake heiress’ played by Julia Garner in the Netflix series *Inventing Anna*, stayed in one of the hotel’s three private riads, they’ve been inundated with Instagrammers. The story goes that when Anna checked out, her credit card was declined (a friend picked up the bill, but ultimately it led to her conviction for fraud). ‘Now, whenever payments don’t go through, guests laugh and say, “Don’t worry, I’m not Anna!” and we sincerely hope they’re not,’ one tells me.

American socialites (real or imagined) aren’t the only ones to have swept through this iconic hotel in the centre of Marrakech. Omar Sharif, Joan Collins, Nelson Mandela, Mick Jagger, Gwyneth Paltrow, Elton John and Nicole Kidman have all stayed here, in the shadow of the snow-capped Atlas mountains, just a short walk from Jemaa el-Fnaa square.

It was Winston Churchill’s favourite winter retreat; Alfred Hitchcock filmed scenes here for *The Man Who Knew Too Much*; Paul McCartney wrote the song *Mamunia* here and Yves Saint Laurent called it home before finding a more permanent one in the medina (don’t miss the brilliant Yves Saint Laurent Museum next to the Majorelle Gardens, which also inspired him). Jacques Majorelle painted the Orientalist ceiling in what is now La Mamounia’s trendy main bar and one of the suites (in his famous vibrant blue hue) is named in his honour. There’s a suite named after Churchill, too, as well as a bar, which is so wonderfully evocative of him that even non-smokers will consider puffing on a cigar.



Above: the recently renovated hotel has had its fair share of famous guests, including Winston Churchill, who has a bar named after him

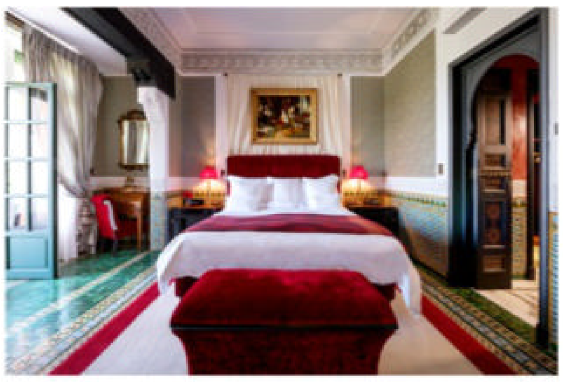
Stepping from the sunshine into the dark, hushed interior, the first thing you notice as you sip on almond milk and nibble on dates (a traditional Moroccan welcome) is the huge marble statue of a man on the back of a camel armed with a spear. Then, as your eyes adjust, you start to see just how much thought was put into the most recent renovation in 2020. It’s in the elaborate chandeliers, sumptuous silk cushions, inlaid tables and delicate woodwork that fill every corner, and it continues into the rooms. Ours, a Park Suite, has heavy, painted doors, muted coral, green and sand tiling, white stone latticework and a walk-in wardrobe with leather drawers in a Hermès orange hue. There are palaces less ornate, I think, as a bellboy pours me a glass of vintage Champagne, made exclusively by Taittinger for the hotel.

We also have a double-length terrace overlooking the magnificent gardens – 20 acres filled with cacti, palm trees, orange groves and sweet-smelling roses. It’s these tranquil gardens, the peace only broken by birdsong, nonchalant cats and the occasional call to prayer, that define the hotel – literally. The name La Mamounia comes from an 18th-century prince called El Mamoun, who was given the gardens by his father as a wedding present. No doubt the feast they enjoyed back then was akin to the one we had at the hotel’s Le Marocain restaurant. Serenaded by musicians, we devour pigeon pastilla, monkfish tagine and pistachio ice cream in an intimate sitting. Two other restaurants, L’Italien and L’Asiatique, overseen by Michelin-starred chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten, have also opened in the hotel, and Parisian pastry chef Pierre Hermé is now in charge of afternoon tea.

Together with a little help from Anna Delvey and Netflix, they’ve managed to do what other grand dame hotels have not; reinvent themselves for the next generation. And with the hotel about to celebrate its centenary in October, it couldn’t have come at a better time. I would love to spend 1,001 nights here – I’m just not sure my credit card would be accepted when I left…

EMMA JUSTICE

CLASSIC ROOMS AT LA MAMOUNIA START FROM £666 A NIGHT. MAMOUNIA.COM. SCOTT DUNN OFFERS THREE NIGHTS AT LA MAMOUNIA FROM £1,950PP, INCLUDING RETURN FLIGHTS FROM THE UK AND PRIVATE TRANSFERS. SCOTTDUNN.COM

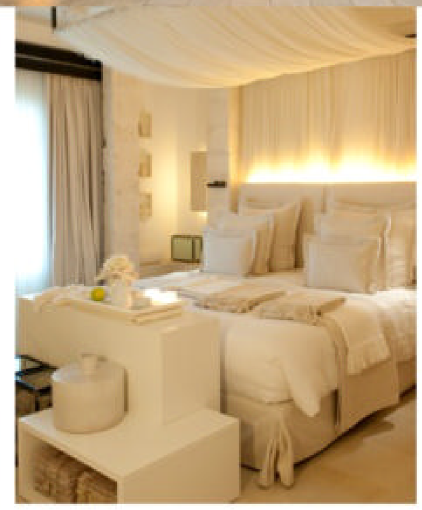


BORGO EGNAZIA, PUGLIA, ITALY

As we pass the imposing clocktower in the main square of Borgo Egnazia, I'm told 'this is the only clock in Borgo' – time proudly has an irrelevance here. I'm being shown around the Puglian resort – borgo literally translates to village, and this is a very chic and stylish one at that. So much so that Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel held their wedding here and Madonna threw a birthday party within these very walls. Artist and designer Pino Brescia oversaw the whole project and headed up the interior design. He was inspired by the simplicity of Puglia's ancient farmhouses and rural villages and worked with local craftsmen and materials. The 'village' comprises a mix of cosy rooms, traditional townhouses and plush villas with their own private pools. I opt for one of the smaller townhouses. Inside, my room makes me feel immediately relaxed with its cool, cream stone walls, neutral tones and soft lighting. It's unfussy but modern and elegant – considered, without being too 'done'.

This seaside resort 'village' even has its own square

It's easy to get lost as I wander the streets of the village. There are four pools (two are child-friendly), six restaurants (one carries a Michelin star, and there's even one on the beach) and the main square, or piazza, which comes alive in the evening, filled with softly lit lanterns and long tables for mingling, eating and dancing to live music. For dinner, I visit the vegetarian restaurant, La Calce. I have the delicious celeriac tagliolino with almond, rocket and seaweed.



On-site fitness activities are plentiful. I take out a bike and cycle along the breezy coastal path, lined with ancient olive trees, adjacent to the resort's 18-hole golf course, which sits atop a headland surrounded by the turquoise waters of the Adriatic Sea. Halfway through, I stop off at the rocky beachside restaurant, for a chilled glass of local white wine and a bowl of the largest green olives I've ever seen.

Above: the Due Camini restaurant has a Michelin star

Daily fitness classes offer yoga (there's even a yoga mat in my room), Pilates, body flow, padel tennis and relaxation. I decide to venture further afield and visit the nearby town of Grottaglie, the home of ceramics. It's my first time at the potter's wheel and, with the help of my teacher, I proudly produce something that mildly resembles a bowl! The local streets are lined with ceramics shops, with the option to ship home.

For the ultimate wind-down, I take advantage of Borgo's Vair Spa. The Roman thermal baths experience lasts around an hour. A dreamy float in the warm pools is followed by a refreshing wade through knee-high cold water and a dousing from an overhead ice-cold water bucket. I find it both relaxing and invigorating in equal measure. Much like my time at Borgo Egnazia.

FIONA ANDREWS

DOUBLE ROOM IN A LA CORTE ROOM FROM AROUND £295 A NIGHT IN LOW SEASON AND FROM £800 A NIGHT IN PEAK SEASON. SPA EXPERIENCE FROM AROUND £107PP. BORGOEGNAZIA.COM. POTTERY WORKSHOP IN GROTTAGLIE FROM AROUND £145PP

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The view of the house from the upper lake

Heckfield Place

IN A VOLVO C40

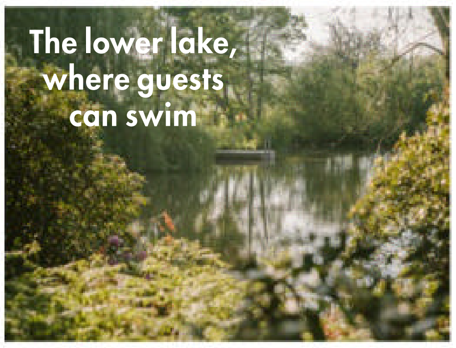
My friend Emily and I are in need of some serious rest and recuperation. I instantly feel my shoulders drop by an inch or two as we're met at the door of Heckfield Place by calm, smiling staff. They unload our bags from our electric Volvo C40 and whisk it off to the charging area.

Heckfield Place is at the heart of a stunning 400-acre Hampshire estate, and as we walk through the house, I catch glimpses of the beautiful grounds through the giant Georgian windows. Our huge room is in the main house and is elegantly decorated with muted colours, contemporary paintings and bespoke wooden furniture pieces.

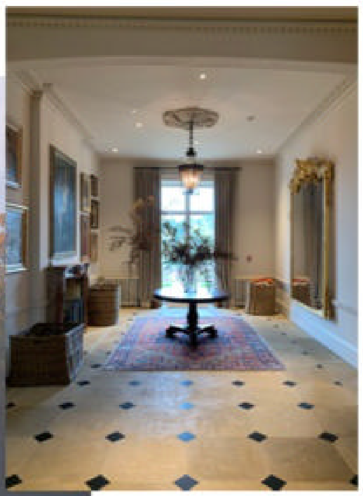
We've booked two movement classes in The Bothy, a large, airy space looking out on to the grounds. After a turmeric and ginger shot, we start with half an hour of meditation and then move on to stretching. By the end of our session, I feel grounded and relaxed. At 4pm, we take tea and scones (a Heckfield tradition, we're told) on the terrace, wrapped in blankets, and watch the sun go down.

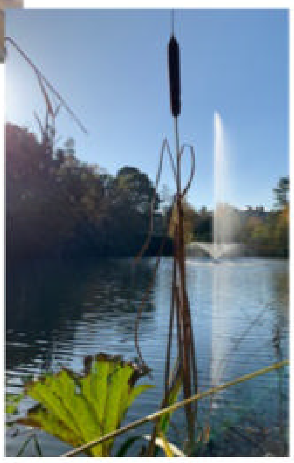
We start the evening with non-alcoholic drinks in the Moon Bar – a juniper, Earl Grey and cardoon cordial cocktail and a Seedlip Garden 108 and tonic – then on to Marle, one of the two restaurants overseen by culinary director Skye Gyngell. I have chicken and Emily has trout; we share an extra side order of triple-cooked roast potatoes, which are as delicious as they sound. And to finish, we order a chocolate torte and ice cream with two forks.

The next morning, we explore the grounds, which are both carefully planted and naturally untamed. When we walk through the ancient arboretum and past the upper lake, it feels quite ethereal. Guests are encouraged to swim in the lower lake, but we decide it's too cold for a dip. Then we jump on bikes, available to borrow, and follow a route that brings us to the organic farm, where a herd of cows produce milk, butter and cream for the restaurants. We arrive back in good time for facials at The Little Bothy spa. Blissed-out and fully recharged, we check out while our car is delivered to us at the door – also fully recharged, I notice. PHILIPPA WILLIAMS



The lower lake, where guests can swim





From top: the entrance hall; our room's bespoke tea cabinet; artwork in the bedroom; the majestic fountain on the upper lake

Stay at Heckfield Place from £450 a night; heckfieldplace.com

The future is here

GETTING THERE

It's like the Volvo C40 has landed in my driveway from the future. I've never driven an electric car before, so one that unlocks, switches itself on and is ready to go before I've put my seatbelt on is a revelation! I search for Heckfield Place on Google Maps navigation and I'm immediately shown where all the recharging points are along my journey – although I won't be needing them because the C40 has a range of up to 311 miles. This is fine by me because, due to the Volvo's effortless driving experience, I have no intention of getting out until I absolutely have to. Within minutes of leaving my house, I feel like I've known the car for years. It's safe, too, with a City Safety function that has pedestrian detection, collision warnings and emergency braking. I'm sad the journey isn't longer.

Cocktails in the Moon Bar

THE CAR…

Volvo C40 Recharge Twin Pro

A few of our favourite things: Google Maps navigation can schedule recharging points along your journey; the leather-free interior uses sustainable materials made from bio-based and recycled materials; door linings and carpets are made from 97% recycled plastic material; Google Assistant voice control allows you to change the cabin temperature or search the web using your voice.

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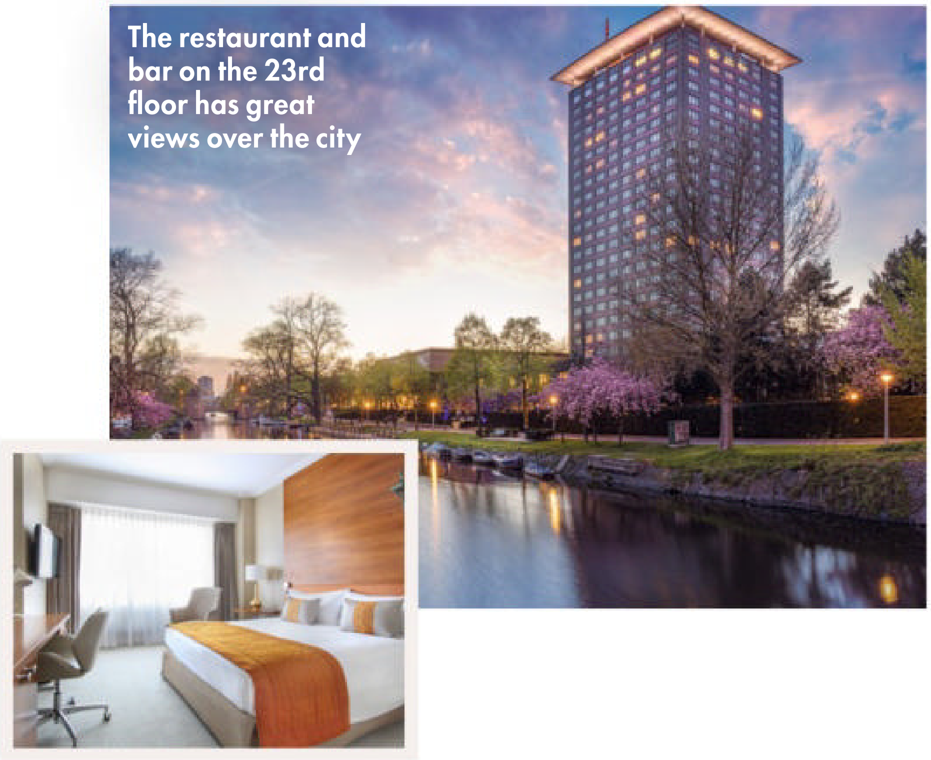
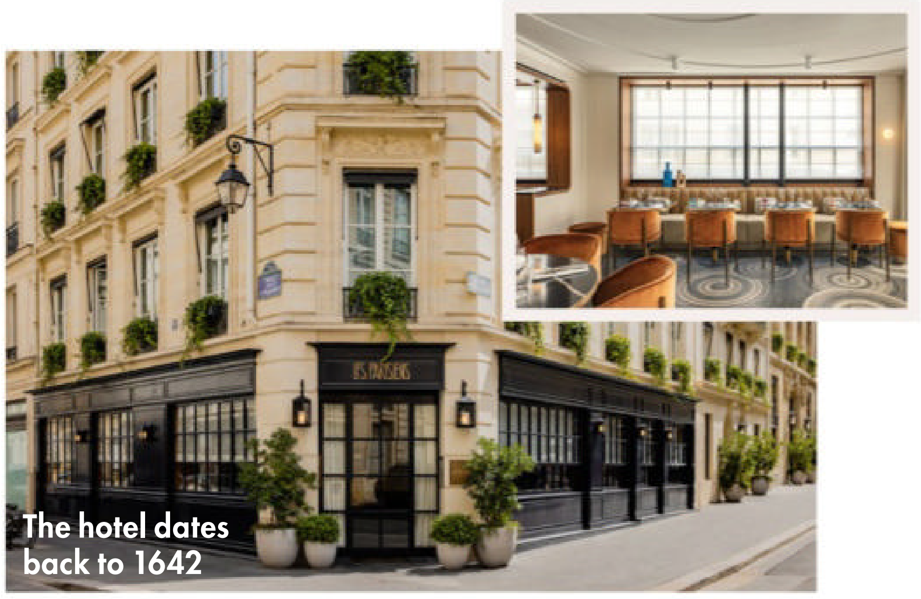
HOTEL OKURA

Amsterdam

Though situated away from the centre in a very residential part of the De Pijp neighbourhood by the Amstel canal, the Okura stands out for the celebrated restaurants it houses. Offering both international and Japanese cuisine, the hotel also has a bar on its 23rd floor that, with its impressive views of the city, is ideal for an evening cocktail. It has light, softly decorated, spacious guestrooms with five-star attention to detail and one of the best spas in Amsterdam, with a large pool and fully equipped gym. There's an understated minimalist Japanese theme running throughout and delightfully tranquil garden and terrace areas.

From £292 per room per night. Read our full review and book at redonline.co.uk/hotelokura


The restaurant and bar on the 23rd floor has great views over the city


The hotel dates back to 1642

PAVILLON FAUBOURG SAINT-GERMAIN

Paris

A beautiful boutique hotel in the heart of artsy district Saint Germain, with a plethora of art galleries, antiques shops and famous cafes frequented by literary icons just minutes away. The bijou spa, plunge pool, fitness room and hammam, along with the excellent restaurant serving a feast of local ingredients skilfully executed, make returning to the hotel after a day exploring all the better. Completely renovated in 2021, the suites and rooms are contemporary in design, blending well with the building's elegant 1642 structure. Expect indulgent silk-patterned walls, geometric tiled and cosy carpeted floors, accents of gold and bold-coloured walls; and coffee-table books dotted around to remind you of the cultural spot you are in.

From £555 per room per night. Read our full review and book at redonline.co.uk/pavillonfaubourg

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The rooms were designed by Christian Lacroix

HOTEL DU PETIT MOULIN

Paris

Hôtel du Petit Moulin is the smallest of four hotels in central Paris run with flair by the Chevalier family. Tucked away in a former bakery in the Marais, its 17 rooms were created in 2005 by fashion designer Christian Lacroix, who let rip with his love of intense colours, plush fabrics, mixed-up patterns and theatrical flourishes. The result is a pioneering 'couture' hotel that is both a period piece and a fun place to stay. With its enthusiastic staff, bountiful breakfasts and an attractive location, this is a unique and characterful base in the heart of the French capital. Additional facilities, including a spa and parking, are available at the nearby sister property Pavillon de la Reine.

From £430 per room per night. Read our full review and book at redonline.co.uk/petitmoulin

ROCCO FORTE HOTEL AMIGO

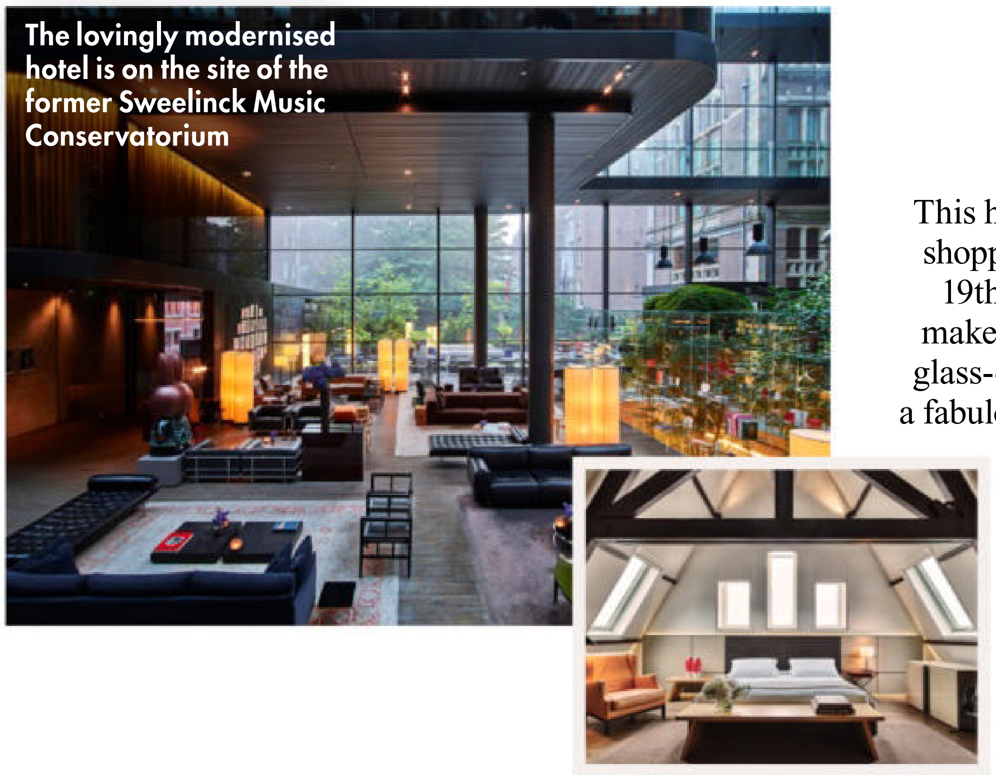
Brussels

With a guestlist of the great and good, celebrities and heads of state, the Rocco Forte Hotel Amigo is in the world's premier league. As it's adjacent to the city's Grand Place, it also holds court over Brussels. Styled by Olga Polizzi, of the Forte family, it has her signature elegantly classy design with subtle Belgian touches, including original art and Flemish tapestries. Bedrooms are sleek and generous, suites palatial – with all the luxurious touches you'd expect, including the occasional antique, and Carrara marble bathrooms. There's a fashionable cocktail bar, with regular live jazz, and a snazzy Italian restaurant. Service is flawless throughout, with concierges who have one of the city's best contact books.

From £423 per room per night. Read our full review and book at redonline.co.uk/hotelamigo

HOTEL AMIGO

The City's Grand Place is a stone's throw away



The lovingly modernised hotel is on the site of the former Sweelinck Music Conservatorium

CONSERVATORIUM HOTEL

Amsterdam

This hotel, located where the city's cultural quarter meets its shopping mecca, is a melding of old and new. An imposing 19th-century building that's had a stunning 21st-century makeover, it feels spacious and sleek. Its centrepiece, a vast glass-covered atrium, cannot fail to impress, and this houses a fabulous meeting place in the form of a large and welcoming lounge area and brasserie. These spaces are separated by glass display cabinets of beautiful contemporary craftware, and modern fixtures, fittings and furniture sit among more traditional items. Supremely comfortable rooms, a sophisticated restaurant and bar and top-tier spa complete the very pretty picture.

From £908 per room per night. Read our full review and book at redonline.co.uk/conservatorium

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The island hotel offers a calming place to unwind

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You'll wake each morning to breakfast in bed and, after your second night, you can make a leisurely start as a late checkout is prearranged.

There's plenty to see and do in the local area, including boat trips and scenic walks around the harbour or shopping and dining in the beautiful cathedral city of Chichester. For R&R, the resort's health and fitness club has a pool, Jacuzzi, sauna and steam room.

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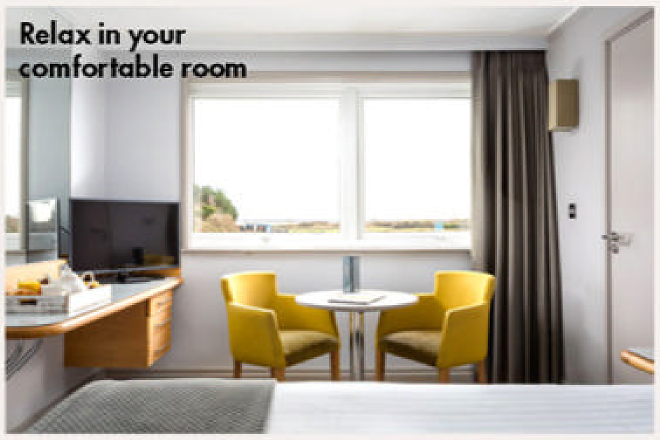
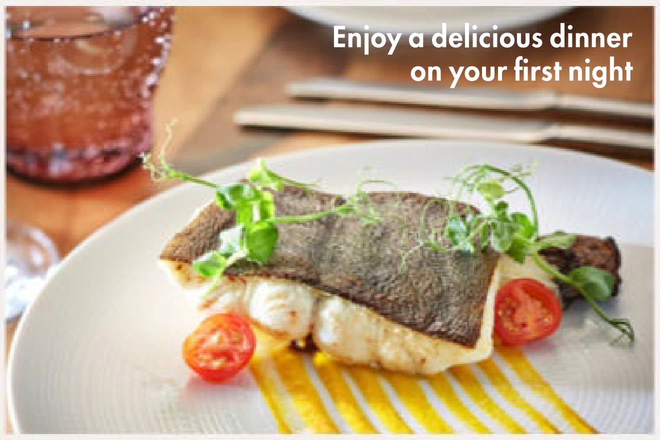


Relax in your comfortable room



Enjoy a delicious dinner on your first night

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Red ESCAPES EXCLUSIVE OFFER

LOVELY EXTRAS, ALL INCLUDED

Make use of the spa facilities and pool

INDULGE IN A BOUTIQUE SPA BREAK WITH DINNER AT TALBOOTH HOUSE & SPA

ESCAPE TO THIS FAMILY-OWNED BOUTIQUE HOTEL IN THE BEAUTIFUL DEDHAM VALE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

A gravel drive brings you to this country house on the border of Essex and Suffolk, where a glass of Champagne will be waiting.

There's a 25-minute spa treatment included in your break – perhaps you'll head straight to the spa for a relaxing Elemis massage or revitalising facial before a swim in the outdoor pool or a soak in the hot tub. You'll also receive a free Elemis gift to take home, worth £45.

Allow time for an aperitif at Jack's Bar before a car whisks you to Talbooth Restaurant, on the River Stour, for a three-course dinner. Dine on delights such as Mersea crab tartlet or Gruyère-crusted halibut with farfalle and tiger prawns.

A restful night's sleep awaits back at Talbooth House & Spa, where morning brings another treat – a fabulous breakfast at nearby milsoms with a chef on hand to prepare your eggs just as you like them. In a corner of Essex that inspired the work of Constable, and with the Dedham Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the doorstep, there is plenty to enjoy.

A courtesy car will take you to the restaurant for dinner

Enjoy views of the River Stour

WHAT'S INCLUDED…

- One-night stay at Talbooth House & Spa.
- A full breakfast at milsoms, Dedham.
- A free glass of Moët & Chandon on arrival or pre dinner.
- A courtesy car to and from Talbooth Restaurant.
- A three-course dinner at the three AA Rosette Talbooth Restaurant.
- A 25-minute treatment each in the Talbooth Spa.
- A free Elemis gift worth £45.
- Use of the spa facilities (outdoor swimming pool, sauna, hot tub) and tennis court.

PRICE

From £200pp*

DATES

Stays until 18th December 2023

TO BOOK

Call 01206 598 154 754, quoting RED TALBOOTH MAY23

VISIT redonline.co.uk/talbooth for more details

**From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room for a one night stay, subject to availability. Price and offer correct at time of print but may be subject to change. This offer is valid Monday to Friday. Saturdays are available on this rate if you book a two-night stay, the Sunday will include either a lunch at Talbooth Restaurant or dinner at milsoms. Single supplement applies. Deposit required. Travel insurance is not included, and should be taken out at time of booking. Images used may not reflect your actual tour experience. This package may be sold through other selected brands. Tour is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Milsom Hotels Ltd.*

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Red ESCAPES
EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE ULTIMATE RESTAURANT WITH ROOMS

WELCOME TO THE SHIP INN

The beach is just seconds away from The Ship Inn

ENJOY A SEASIDE STAY AT THE SHIP INN IN THE TRANQUIL NORFOLK COUNTRYSIDE

SPEND TWO NIGHTS IN THIS WONDERFUL COASTAL HOTEL JUST MOMENTS FROM THE MUNDESLEY BEACH AND WITH EXCELLENT DINING OPTIONS

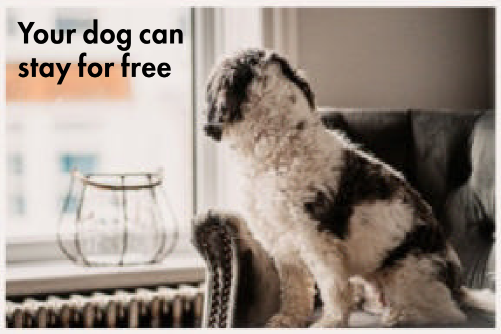
Close to the golden sands and colourful huts of Mundesley Beach in North Norfolk, The Ship Inn is a perfect seafront bolthole.

Decked out in nautical hues, each of the bedrooms has been carefully put together with your comfort in mind. You'll be sleeping in a Deluxe Sea View double, where you'll find beds kitted out with 400-thread-count Egyptian cotton sheets, goose-down duvets and sumptuous pillows.

Our offer includes £25 per person to spend in the hotel's Beachside Restaurant, where you'll find gastro-pub fare rustled up from the finest Norfolk ingredients. Tuck into fish and chips or a signature pie and mash – and, if the weather's on your side, you can head out into the beer garden for dazzling sea views.

The Ship Inn is dog-friendly and one four-legged friend can stay for free as part of our offer – the perfect excuse to get out and about on one of the many heavenly walking routes in the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

There are seven boutique rooms



Your dog can stay for free

WHAT'S INCLUDED...

- Two-night stay in a Deluxe Sea View double.
- Breakfast both mornings.
- £25pp dining allowance on the first night.
- Welcome drink; house gin, Prosecco, wine or beer.
- One dog stays free.
- Late checkout.
- Weekend supplements: £50 a night on Fridays and Saturdays.

PRICE

From £199pp* for two nights

DATES

Stays until 30th June 2023

TO BOOK, CALL

01263 200 036, quoting RED SHIP INN

VISIT

redonline.co.uk/shipinn for more details.

*From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room for a two-night stay, subject to availability. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Single supplement £169. Deposit 25%. Price for Sunday to Thursday stays only, £50 a night supplement for stays on a Friday or Saturday night. Stay is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Original Collection.

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Red ESCAPES
EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE PERFECT FARMHOUSE HOTEL

The intimate Georgian farmhouse has 19 rooms

CHECK IN TO WIDBROOK GRANGE, A BOUTIQUE FARMHOUSE ON THE EDGE OF THE COTSWOLDS

DISCOVER STYLE AND CHARM IN A PEACEFUL POCKET OF COUNTRYSIDE NEAR BRADFORD-ON-AVON

Chic Widbrook Grange near Bath is a home away from home – but with all the service and pampering of a gorgeous getaway.

You'll be greeted with a welcome drink before being shown to a Classic Double room in either a converted stable or an annex of the main farmhouse. This is rustic done right, with every piece of the higgledy-piggledy furnishing handpicked for its charm factor.

Your first night includes a three-course dinner in The Kitchen Restaurant. After dining, you can investigate The Gin Bar – a drinking den boasting one of the best gin collections in the region, with more than 165 choices.

For a boutique hotel with just 19 rooms, the small indoor pool is an unexpected extra to enjoy. But what lies outside is even more enticing: 11 acres of grounds that surround the hotel.

WHAT'S INCLUDED...

- Two-night stay in a Classic Double room.
- Breakfast both mornings.
- £25pp dining allowance on the first night.
- Welcome drink; house gin, Prosecco, wine or beer.
- Complimentary use of the indoor pool and gym.
- One dog stays free.
- Late checkout.
- Weekend supplements: £50 a night on Fridays and Saturdays.

PRICE
From £189.50pp* for two nights

DATES
Stays until 30th June 2023

TO BOOK, CALL
01225 591 182, quoting REDWIDBROOK

VISIT
redonline.co.uk/widbrookgrange for more details.

The Kitchen Restaurant does a great breakfast in bed

Why not upgrade to a Super Deluxe Double room?

**From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room for a two-night stay, subject to availability. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Single supplement £169. Deposit 25%. Price for Sunday to Thursday stays only, £50 a night supplement for stays on a Friday or Saturday night. Stay is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Original Collection.*

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GOOD NIGHTS WITH
COUNTRY LIVING AT DREAMS

The new Country Living Collection of premium bed frames at Dreams brings traditional style and supreme comfort to every bedroom.

These rustic-inspired frames are handcrafted to create a weathered-oak finish. There are two stylish headboard choices – textured rattan (Tollymore, above) or luxurious linen (Ullswater, right) – designed to complement every style of decor. And with sprung wooden slats that flex with the movement of the mattress, you're sure to enjoy the perfect night's sleep.

See the full *Country Living* Collection at dreams.co.uk/country-living

COUNTRY LIVING | Dreams
Love your bed

STARS

YASMIN BOLAND REVEALS WHAT'S IN STORE FOR YOU THIS MONTH

TAURUS

21st April to 21st May

YOU KNOW HOW LIFE JUST SEEMS TO FLOW SOMETIMES AND YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE IN STEP WITH THE UNIVERSE? YOU'RE ABOUT TO MOVE INTO ONE OF THOSE PERIODS. EVERYTHING SHOULD START TO HEAD IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION – AT HOME, AT WORK, WITH FAMILY AND EVERYWHERE ELSE. ENJOY!

GEMINI

22nd May to 22nd June

You're known for being a fun-loving and flirtatious sign, but right now the heavens are conspiring to bring out your more spiritual side. If you have a mere inkling of an interest in yoga, meditation or anything else that brings together mind, body and soul, why not explore it and see where it leads you? It could change your life for the better.

CANCER

23rd June to 23rd July

You're moving into the most social time you've had in more than a decade. Expect new friends and invitations, plus fun times with old friends, once this cycle kicks in after 18th May. Just be sure to balance your friends' needs with your own – get this right and there will be good times ahead.

LEO

24th July to 23rd August

Last month centred around a great gust of cosmic energy in your working life. Did you feel it? This month, it's time to reconcile the personal and professional and get the balance right. Even if your brilliant career is blossoming, be sure to carve out quality time with family in between the demands of work.

VIRGO

24th August to 23rd September

So have you decided where you want to go next? The good news is your travel chart is still in the spotlight, but this month's Full Moon eclipse means you may start to feel torn between going off on an adventure versus responsibilities at home. Take a tip from the skies and find a balance between the two that doesn't involve working too hard.

LIBRA

24th September to 23rd October

Being an Air sign, it's all too easy for you to live in your head rather than your heart. But as of this month, the planet of expansion, Jupiter, is in your Intimacy Zone. Think about who in your life you would like to know better and be closer to. It doesn't have to be romantic – it could be a friendship thing.

SCORPIO

24th October to 22nd November

With the eclipse this month in your sign, it's the end of one cycle and the start of another, so your life should feel like a work in progress right now. Think big: what do you want to do with the rest of your life? At the same time, lucky Jupiter is moving into position in your Love Zone, so you can expect more romance.

SAGITTARIUS

23rd November to 21st December

It's important that you think about your routines. That might not sound terribly exciting, but if you put some effort into the way you're living your life on a daily basis, you'll end up feeling more stable and functional, as well as happier. Release any habits that you know are not working for you as a first step.

CAPRICORN

22nd December to 20th January

Capricorns have had the most intense astrology of all the signs for quite a number of years, but now relief is at hand. For a start, the planet that's been causing all the ruckus, Pluto, has finally slipped out of your sign and will stay away for a while. Meanwhile, joyful Jupiter is now in your Fun Zone. All in all, life should be happier.

AQUARIUS

21st January to 19th February

The start of the rest of your life – or at least the next 20 years of it – begins here. Pluto is in your sign, so expect the chance to totally revolutionise your life, but don't go burning the whole thing down straight away (tempting though it may be). Begin by ditching anything – or anyone – that has clearly gone toxic.

PISCES

20th February to 20th March

If there's one thing for your to-do list this month, it's to start thinking more positively. As lucky Jupiter moves into your Mind Zone and clashes with Pluto, there will be fewer challenges in the second half of the month. Once you get into the habit of looking on the bright side, watch how your life starts to transform.

ARIES

21st March to 20th April

Whether you've struggled to earn enough or have routinely blown your budget in the past, that can all change now, as lucky Jupiter hits your Money Zone. As long as you're sensible about how much money you have to play with and don't overspend, you should find that you're moving into a more abundant cycle at last.

For your extended month forecast, visit Yasmin's website at yasminboland.com

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Willow & Hall design and sell quality upholstered living and bedroom furniture, handmade in Britain, using the finest materials. Designs are available in over 150 fabrics and with a choice of seat fillings. Sofa beds come with three luxury mattress options, and with a depth of 14cm, they're perfect for occasional or everyday use.

As part of Willow & Hall's exceptional level of customer service, they offer nationwide delivery on all made-to-order furniture from 4 weeks or within 2 weeks if you order from their fast delivery and clearance ranges. They also offer a 14-day free returns policy, whatever your personalisation.

Visit willowandhall.co.uk or call 020 8939 3800 for more information or to order free samples.

This month's ESSENTIALS

NO MORE SUMMER CHAFING

Embrace the heat of the season without the discomfort of burning thighs. **The Big Bloomers Company's Anti Chafing Slip Shorts** are the ultimate summer solution. Designed in Britain and made in Italy, they're extremely soft, lightweight and breathable – so much so, you'll barely know you've got them on. Sizes **UK8-36+**

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Beat joint discomfort with **Turmeric+**

★ Trustpilot ★★★★★
EXCELLENT - Over 7,000 reviews

10 million people in the UK have a condition that affects their joints.

The NHS reports around 10 million people in the UK have a condition that affects their joints, most commonly in the knees, hands, wrists, shoulders, feet and back.

From genes to diet to lifestyle and even the weather, has an influence on our musculoskeletal health – but nutrition is always essential.

A diet rich in fruits, dark leafy vegetables and oily fish brings helpful antioxidant and anti- inflammatory benefits. A growing number of people are also turning to turmeric-based products and nutritional supplements for extra support.

'The difference it made was unbelievable.'

But not all turmeric supplements are created equal. Many focus on one key active ingredient called curcumin – but it's very difficult for our bodies to absorb, and unless it's made 'bioavailable', it can pass through the gut unused, even if we take lots of it.

To overcome these challenges, scientists in Cambridge developed a unique supplement called Turmeric+, featuring the world's most scientifically researched bioavailable curcumin formulation, and users are saying that restoring their joint health can be life-changing.

FutureYou Cambridge receives hundreds of 5-star Trustpilot reviews for Turmeric+, like Sylvia Pilgrim from Manchester 'The difference it made was unbelievable!' she said.

Turmeric+ was developed by FutureYou Cambridge, a British developer of innovative supplements backed by extensive scientific research.

The company needed to overcome the key challenge with turmeric: making the curcuminoids much easier for our bodies to absorb. They wanted an alternative, better solution to the black pepper formulations so often used, one that would be rich in the full bouquet of curcuminoids.

So the nutritional experts at FutureYou Cambridge used a patented Curcuma Phospholipid Complex formulation called Meriva® that makes curcumin 30 times more absorbable than standard turmeric powder. 'Our advanced formulation works by using plant-based lecithin to mimic the way the body naturally absorbs curcuminoids after eating turmeric cooked with fat,' explains Dr Miriam Ferrer, PhD, from FutureYou Cambridge. 'But it delivers far more than you'd normally get from a meal – the equivalent of 150g of raw turmeric in a single tablet.'

It's also enhanced with vitamins C and D which contribute to normal function of cartilage and normal muscle function.*

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***Turmeric+ contains vitamin C which contributes to normal collagen formation for the normal function of cartilage and bones. Vitamin D contributes to the maintenance of normal muscle function.** Introductory offer valid for new UK customers only. Offer expires 30th June 2023 and cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotions. Cancel any time, without obligation. See FutureYouHealth.com/TF648 for full terms and conditions.

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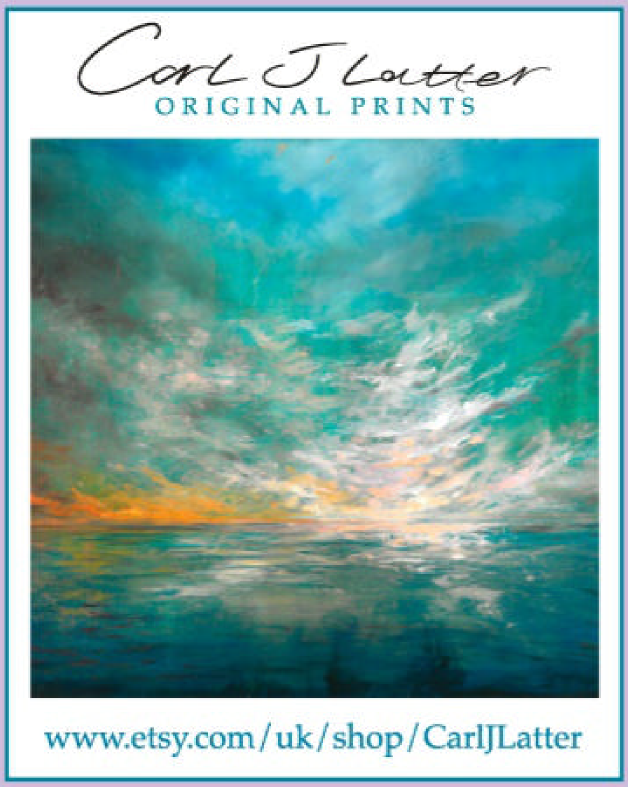
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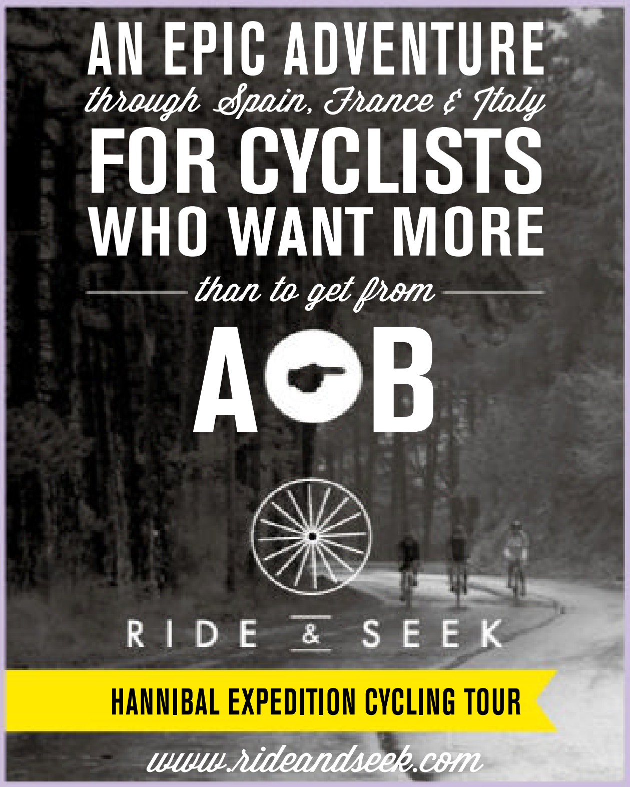
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My list of EVERYTHING

FOUNDER OF HAIRCARE BRAND CHĀMPO **KULDEEP KNOX** ON HER FAVOURITE THINGS

MY CAN'T-MISS PODCAST IS... *On Purpose With Jay Shetty*. I'm drawn to his story, positivity and range of guests. I also enjoy *How I Built This With Guy Raz*. It's comforting to hear stories from other founders about how they overcame obstacles along the journey.

THE CANDLE I LOVE TO LIGHT IS... Cannelle by Diptyque – a spicy, warm and woody fragrance. It's one of the original Diptyque candles and gives a perfect homely scent.

MY SIGNATURE LIPSTICK IS... Very Victoria by Charlotte Tilbury. It's ideal for my skin tone and it gives a natural look.

MY FAVOURITE INDEPENDENT SHOP IS... Superette in Islington. A great deli with food and wine picked from some of my favourite London restaurants.

MY FOODIE WEAKNESS IS... Matcha mille crepe. A must-have Japanese dessert.

WHEN I SEND FLOWERS, I CALL... Bloom & Wild. It has a great selection and the customer care is brilliant. I happen to know the founder, but I would be a customer anyway.

MY ONE-STOP MORNING COFFEE SHOP IS... I'm not a coffee drinker, but for a morning treat, Pophams in Islington is a great bakery.

ON TOAST, I LOVE TO SPREAD... Strawberry jam, and lots of it!

MY FAVOURITE PAIR OF SHOES is... Gianvito Rossi Chester boots. Both stylish and practical, they're perfect to wear with a blazer or oversized jumper.

MY SIGNATURE SCENT IS... It changes, but currently Black Orchid or Lost Cherry by Tom Ford. Anything floral and spicy.

HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE
DALE CARNEGIE
TOM FORD BLACK ORCHID

Kuldeep loves Black Orchid by Tom Ford, The Office, How To Win Friends And Influence People and Very Victoria lipstick

THE SHADE I ALWAYS PAINT MY NAILS IS... Chai latte, as it's subtle and perfect for any season.

THE BOOK I KEEP ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE IS... *How To Win Friends And Influence People* by Dale Carnegie – a book that I repeatedly read. I find it uplifting and empowering.

THE BOXSET I WATCH OVER AND OVER IS... Quite often I find myself rewatching *The Office*. The UK series was way ahead of its time.

MY BEST-EVER HOLIDAY WAS... The Seychelles. Beautifully wild and tropical.

MY FAVOURITE HOTEL FOR A WEEKEND AWAY IS... Château de la Messardière in Saint-Tropez. It has beautiful views over Pampelonne Beach and its own beach club.

THE THING I CAN'T STOP BUYING FOR MY HOME IS... Art. It's become both a passion and investment area for me. I have some beautiful pieces of abstract expressionism by female artists from the 1950s and 1960s.

WHEN I WANT TO CRY WITH LAUGHTER, I CALL... An old friend who always has the best (and most unusual) dating stories...

THE SONG THAT GETS ME ON THE DANCEFLOOR IS... If the vibe is good, any!

MY FOOLPROOF DINNER-PARTY DISH IS... Chicken makhani. I follow Dishoom's recipe book – it's time-consuming but worth it.

THE MANTRA I LIVE BY IS... Have the courage to do the things that you are most afraid of.

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